



DON'T RISK A  
TORY MP WHO  
IS NOT ON  
YOUR SIDE.

# LABOUR'S CRISIS

WHERE NOW FOR THE PARTY AFTER BATLEY & SPEN BY-ELECTION? >>Page 20

THOUSANDS ON  
THE STREETS  
AGAINST TORIES  
AND OPPRESSION  
>>PAGES 4&5



# Socialist Worker

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SAJID JAVID IS GUNNING FOR THE NHS

# TORIES' HEALTH HITMAN

He wants to lift all lockdown rules—as virus spreads



He'll target the health service for privatisation and more pay cuts

## UNITE UNION

Back Sharon Graham in vote, say workers

SHARON GRAHAM is running for general secretary for the Unite union based on a campaign calling for a return to the workplace.

She has large support among the union's rank and file workers. Unite members told Socialist Worker why Graham is linked to the fight for workplace organising

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## RACISM



**Ultraviolence—giving voice to victims of cops**

DIRECTOR KEN Fero is known for his film Injustice. Its depiction of state violence, directed primarily at black people, struck a chord.

Now he has spoken to Socialist Worker about his new film, Ultraviolence, and again police killings are the main focus.

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## PALESTINE

Protesters take on Palestinian Authority

THE PALESTINIAN Authority (PA) has launched a crackdown on protesters and activists in West Bank cities.

Protesters are angry at the PA for arresting prominent activists, and for failing to resist Israel's occupation of Palestine.

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## THE THINGS THEY SAY

### 'He put his family first'

Tory MP Brandon Lewis doesn't seem to understand What Matt Hancock has been up to

### 'Give the Tories a stick to beat Labour with'

Labour shadow cabinet minister **Thangam Debbonaire** says free social care is too expensive. So going back on Keir Starmer pledge that he would introduce free social care

### 'Give alms to the oppressed'

An 11 year old primary school pupil was referred to the government's Prevent programme after a teacher mistook the word "alms" for "arms"

### 'Crack skulls'

Donald Trump's response to anti-racism protests in the US

### 'Just shoot them'

Trump's instruction to head of the US army General Mark Milley head of the US army to deal with the protests after cops killed George Floyd's

### 'Well, shoot them in the leg—or maybe the foot. But be hard on them!'

Trump's response when the general refused



# US paramilitary training for Khashoggi assassins

**FOUR SAUDIS** who participated in the 2018 killing of columnist Jamal Khashoggi received paramilitary training in the United States the previous year under a contract approved by the US State Department.

The New York Times says training was provided by Tier 1 Group, which is owned by a private equity firm.

Tier 1 Group was founded to train US military personnel.

But as US military training budgets began to shrink, the company searched for new clients.

By 2014, it was beginning to train foreign military units, including Saudis. Its trainers are said to include former employees of the notorious Blackwater mercenary group.

The State Department initially granted the Tier 1 Group a licence for the paramilitary training of the Saudi Royal Guard, starting in 2014 during the Barack Obama administration.

The training continued during at least the first year of former president Donald



Tier 1 group boss Louis Brenner

Trump's term. Khashoggi, a US resident who wrote opinion columns for the Washington Post was critical of Saudi crown prince Mohammed Bin Salman.

He was killed and dismembered by a team of operatives linked to the prince in the kingdom's consulate in Istanbul in October 2018.

A US intelligence report in February said the crown prince had approved an operation to capture or kill the journalist.

**MEANWHILE** THE British government is going for Qatar as the partner of choice.

The Royal Air Force (RAF) already has one joint unit with the Qatari air force which was set up last year. It is Britain's first joint squadron with another nation since the Second World War, when Polish pilots helped fight the Battle of Britain.

The Ministry of Defence announced another squadron with Qatar will be established in September, based at RAF Leeming in Yorkshire.

The scheme, which was agreed earlier this year, will train British and Qatari pilots on Hawk fighter aircraft and enhance "interoperability and coordination between both air forces".

The Yorkshire base will permanently host nine Hawk aircraft Britain is selling to the Qataris.

These jets are currently being built by arms corporation BAE Systems at its factory in Warton, Lancashire.

**BHS STORES** went into liquidation in 2016. A parliamentary investigation found it had been systematically plundered under its former owners Phillip Green and Dominic Chappell. Now comes news that the liquidators, Anthony Wright and Geoffrey Rowley of FRP Advisory LLP, have taken fees of £4,858,117. More is expected. The exorbitant fees will ensure that unsecured creditors—including employees—will receive next to nothing.

Profits in loss

**MATT HANCOCK** was rather less generous with NHS doctors than he was with Gina Coladangelo, who earned £15,000 a year for 15 days' work at his former department.

According to government records, GPs will be given just 50p a patient to help them deal with the potential tsunami of long-Covid cases.

## Brew Dog is the rebel face of avoiding tax

**NEARLY** A quarter of Brewdog's shares are held in the Cayman Islands.

The beer giant was launched by James Watt and Martin Dickie in 2007 and has built up a global following mainly through its "equity for punks" Crowdfunding initiatives. These have attracted more than 145,000 small shareholders.

But it has emerged that almost a quarter of its shares are held by obscure partnerships in notorious tax haven the Cayman Islands.

It also has one very un-punk big backer—Conservative donor Jon Moynihan. Some 23.25 percent of the

firm's shares are owned by two exempted limited partnerships, who hold "liquidation preference". This means that if the beer company goes bust, they would get their money back first. The partnerships are controlled by TSG Consumer Partners, a US private equity firm with more than £6.4 billion in assets.

## Osborne new job among his friends

**FORMER** chancellor George Osborne is in charge of loot grabbed by the British empire at the British Museum.

Osborne was handed the job after a process led by the deputy chair Minouche Shafik.

Amazing how things come around.

Seven years ago Baroness Shafik became deputy governor of the Bank of England after a process led by Osborne.

Lord Sassoon, a Tory peer, is the deputy chair of the museum's board and was a Treasury minister under Osborne.

Another board member is Philipp Hildebrand. The

Swiss banker is vice chair of BlackRock, the world's largest investment fund. BlackRock previously employed Osborne for four years on a salary of £650,000.

Osborne's latest position means he is now down to only nine jobs in all.

He is a partner at Robey Warshaw, a boutique Mayfair bank.

And he has advisory roles at the venture capital firm 9Yards Capital, and a Netherlands-based holding company called Exor.

BP is one of Robey Warshaw's biggest clients.

Happily the oil company is one of the museum's major sponsors.

## Free after 32 years jail for false murder conviction

A MAN has walked free from prison after 32 years after his murder conviction was overturned due to new evidence.

Gilbert Poole jr was jailed for the murder of Robert Mejia in 1988 in Detroit, Michigan.

He had always challenged the ruling.

A crucial part of Poole's conviction was the testimony of Dr Allan Warnick, a clinical professor at the University of Detroit School of Dentistry. He was considered an expert in "bite mark analysis".

Warnick testified that Poole's teeth matched a bite mark found on Mejia's right arm above the elbow.

Warnick also claimed

Gilbert Poole Jr walks free

that the odds of anyone other than Poole having made a bite mark appearing on the murder victim were "2.1 billion to one."

This was a central part of the evidence used to persuade the jury that Poole was guilty.

However, bite mark analysis and the expert witness work of Dr Warnick have since been discredited. Several convictions based on his testimony have been overturned.

Several bloodstains from the crime scene were Type O which matched Mejia's blood type.

Other crime scene blood was Type A which did not match either the victim or Poole's blood type. Poole's blood type is AB and shared by only three percent of the population.

None of this evidence was presented at trial by his legal counsel.

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# Sajid Javid will front new attack on safety and NHS

by YURI PRASAD

**NEW HEALTH secretary Sajid Javid has been hired by Boris Johnson as a hitman.**

His first job will be to bring an end to the last remaining coronavirus restrictions and allow businesses to fully reopen—even if the price is the further spread of Covid-19.

During his weekend tour of media studios, Javid was clear that this is his “most immediate priority”, saying he wants to see a return to normal “as quickly as possible”.

For months the Tory right has been pushing hard for a figure such as Javid to take the reins.

They want a health secretary that ignores warnings from scientists and other “experts”.

Instead, they demand the freedom to make profits.

“He’s a real lockdown sceptic,” one Tory insider told the Daily Telegraph newspaper this week.

“He’s convinced that in a few years’ time, with the economic costs so high, everyone will be thinking ‘Why the hell did we do that?’”

Yet the demand that all lockdown measures are withdrawn by 19 July is incredibly reckless.

## Surge

Britain is being hit by a surge in infections, driven by the Delta variant that is around 60 percent more contagious than previous versions of the virus.

That means the likelihood of the coronavirus finding all those who are unvaccinated, and those whose immune systems are weak is much greater than before.

That is one reason why the number of people being hospitalised is rising.

It’s true that the numbers of people dying are comparatively small, and that this likely reflects the success of vaccinations.

But it ignores the hundreds of thousands of people who suffer debilitating symptoms of “long Covid” after an infection.

One rising area of infection is schools. Javid is being urged to end the system of bubbles that aims to slow the spread by telling pupils to isolate if they’ve had contact with an infected pupil or staff member.

But the Tories focus on unlocking has other advantages for the government. It distracts from the crisis that is engulfing the NHS.

The huge queues and 12-hour waits at hospital A&E units got no mention from Javid last weekend.

Nor did the astonishing 5 million people now waiting for treatment—the highest since records began.

And, the promised review of Britain’s collapsing social care system has also been delayed.

Another reason the Tory right is applauding Javid’s appointment is that he is pro-austerity and hates the idea of publicly funded healthcare.

As a paid adviser to JP Morgan, he will doubtless help the US bank exploit the “opportunities that lie ahead” for private healthcare.

And, we can expect Javid to be among the first to tell health workers that there is “no magic money tree” when it comes to their long overdue pay rise.

## Hancock gone, but questions remain

THE PRIME minister is still facing questions about former health secretary Matt Hancock, who resigned last weekend.

Hancock quit over his affair with his aide Gina Coladangelo, which involved breaking social distancing guidelines.

After news of the affair broke Boris Johnson quickly declared the matter “closed”. He also declined to sack Hancock last month after he was judged to have broken the ministerial code for failing to declare his stake in an NHS supplier.

But the rot goes far deeper than that.

First, many are now asking how former lobbyist Coladangelo was appointed as Hancock’s aide last year. And why did she move so quickly to be a non-executive director of the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)?

Despite having no recorded health experience, Coladangelo’s job came with a £15,000 salary for just 15 to 20 days of work a year.

Secondly, why was Hancock’s relationship with Coladangelo’s not acknowledged, despite her brother being an executive of a firm that has won a string of NHS contracts?

Roberto Coladangelo works at Partnering Health Ltd, which provides “consultancies” and other private services to the health service.

It was awarded a £28 million contract with South Central Ambulance Service NHS Trust last year.

Third, did Hancock breach rules by using a private email account for government business?

That would allow him to circumvent disclosure rules and conduct trading relationships in secret.

It also makes it harder to make Freedom of Information requests.

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- Send ‘start’ to the number

## Onto the streets on Saturday

HEALTH ACTIVISTS across Britain are preparing for action this weekend.

As many people as possible should join them.

Keep Our NHS Public and other groups, including NHS Workers Say No, have come together to organise dozens of protests and marches.

The campaign is centred around demands for patient safety, pay justice and end to privatisation.

These will be an excellent chance to bring together community

campaigners and health workers. The appointment of Sajid Javid as health secretary could well herald a new era of cuts and privatisation in our already battered NHS.

With US multinationals hoovering up GP practices, and private health care providers making a killing from providing services to overwhelmed NHS hospitals, there could hardly be a more important time to protest.

For details of your nearest NHS birthday protest this Saturday, 3 July, go to [bit.ly/NHS3July](https://bit.ly/NHS3July)



# Anti-Tory march helps put anger on streets

Thousands united from various campaigns and causes to direct their anger at government failures and austerity, reports Nick Clark

**A LEFT wing march of thousands of people through central London on Saturday brought together many strands of anger at the Tory government.**

The march called by the People's Assembly wanted to send a message to the Tories that they will start to face resistance again.

Organisers branded the march as "united against the Tories". There was a focus on blatant corruption of Tory ministers, failures that caused tens of thousands of excess deaths and attacks on working class people.

As Holly, a health worker from Hastings, put it, "The Tories have brought me to this march. They're corrupt and they're taking the mickey out of workers."

She told Socialist Worker, "They're more worried about getting children to sing silly patriotic songs at school than they are about prosecuting their own ministers."

Protesters had a litany of reasons to march. One of them, who came with the CWU union, told Socialist Worker, "We want to show solidarity with Unite and GMB unions."

"They are fighting against fire and rehire."

He added, "It's not just fire and rehire. There's zero hour contracts—after ten years of austerity, these are the kind of jobs our kids have got."

"I'm here to defend the NHS, and for a proper social care system—that's very important to me."

## Palestine

People from many other campaigns and causes made up large sections of the march. One of the biggest sections was a bloc from the Palestine Solidarity Campaign and Friends of Al-Aqsa.

Even weeks after Israel's assault on Gaza ended, thousands of people still want to march for Palestine—and turn the anger on the Tories.

One marcher said, "Israel bombs Gaza, and Britain sells it bombs. We need to stop that, and we need sanctions on Israel." There were blocs

from other campaigns too, including Kill the Bill, Extinction Rebellion and Stand Up to Racism.

Esha said she came with the Stand Up To Racism bloc because "there's never been a more important time to march."

"People are fighting institutional racism all over the world."

Marchers from every bloc said it was important to see different campaigns come together.

Rich said he came on the march after joining the Kill the Bill protests. He added was glad to be marching alongside people from other movements, such as Extinction Rebellion, because the Police and Crime bill affects everyone's right to protest.

"A year ago a lot of people from Extinction Rebellion would have said we love the cops," he said. "Now they're marching alongside us."

## Argument

Yet underlying the unity is an argument about how to challenge the Tories. The rally at the end of the march was top-loaded with Labour politicians and trade union officials.

Many of them called for Tory ministers such as Matt Hancock to resign—and raised demands such as a national social care service.

Howard Beckett from the Unite union criticised the "abject response of Labour". He also called for people to support Steve Turner in the election for Unite's general secretary. Yet neither he nor Turner—who chaired the rally—said what Unite would do to fight the Tories.

And despite some banners from trade union branches, including from the CWU, Unite, the RMT and Aslef, there were no large union blocs.

The march could have been much larger if they had mobilised properly.

Many protesters said they wanted more action.

Holly said, "We need more unity on the left and show people that there is an alternative—people are standing up to the Tories."



**PALESTINE ACTIVISTS and trade unionists on the People's Assembly march in central London last Saturday**

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

# Extinction Rebellion protests at media silence on climate crisis

EXTINCTION Rebellion (XR) dumped manure outside the offices of the Daily Mail, The Independent and The Evening Standard on Sunday.

The action was called to highlight the failure of the mainstream press to address the severity of the climate crisis. It was the climax of a weekend of protest for XR after activists from the group joined the People's Assembly demonstration on Saturday.

The police raided an XR warehouse and an art centre on Friday ahead of the protests. It was filled with art materials, including the papier-mache heads of a number of the media tycoons. Twelve activists were arrested during these raids.

But despite the intimidation from the police, over 3,000 activists joined the Free the Press demonstration on Sunday.

Protesters gathered in Parliament Square at midday. Placards read, "Press silence is killing us," and, "The Sun... may contain hate".

Amy is part of the XR group in Cheltenham. She told Socialist



**Manure outside the Daily Mail**

Worker that she was at the protest to "pressure the press into drawing more attention to the climate crisis".

She added that she thinks that it's unfair how climate activists are represented by the mainstream media.

## Criminals

"Climate activists are well meaning, but we're often presented as criminals in the papers," Amy said.

It was clear from the demonstration that XR are looking to play a larger part in the wider

movement, possibly to combat the critique of the movement being "too white" or "middle class."

Protesters heard speeches from other movements and groups, including, Black Lives Matter and the Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign.

XR's attendance at the People's Assembly demonstration the day before was also a good sign that the group recognises the need to target the Tories.

XR have also been one of the most consistent groups in organising against the Tories' new Police and Crime bill.

Annesha told Socialist Worker that it was clear why XR is still targeted by the press and the Tories. "XR are still a threat to the state," she argued. "Why would they write the things they do about us or mention us in the Police and Crime Bill if it wasn't?"

The state is continuing attacks on XR. Socialists and trade unionists must join the mobilisations and actions organised by the climate group to hit back at the state's intimidation of protesters.

**Sophie Squire**



# Biggest ever Trans+ Pride march demands rights now

SOME 10,000 protesters raged at transphobia at London Trans+ Pride on Saturday.

It was twice the size of last year's militant protest—and shows the growing anger at the Tories' attacks on trans rights.

Dumped planned reforms to the Gender Recognition Act could have made it much easier for trans people to change their gender legally.

One protester told Socialist Worker the Tories' attack on trans rights "means we feel like we shouldn't exist and have to hide".

It was very positive to see 12 National Education Union banners on the march. This is the sort of support that's needed to win lasting changes.

Etheel Activeest wanted the Pride to "bring awareness to trans issues". "It shows we're not going away—there's a lot to do," they said. "We have to get rid of the anti-trans laws and we have to show trans youth we are there for them."

At the protest, marchers made it clear that Pride is a protest. Chants included, "It's our history—don't deny it Stonewall was a fucking riot," and, "Whose Pride? Our Pride. Whose protest? Our protest."

## Attention

And others chanted, "Pride is not for profit, keep your hands off it," and "Pick your side, no cops at pride."

Lyca Ada Rose said, "Trans rights are under attack culturally and legislatively."

"Protest protects our rights and it's our chance to say what we think—and for people to listen and pay attention."

Emma told Socialist Worker that, as a trans person, she thought it was important to be "politically active" by being on a protest.

"Pride should 100 percent be a protest—it's an opportunity to fight," she said.

Robin said, "Protest won us rights like abortion. It's still important we are out to fight and



Trans+ Pride was a vibrant protest

raise awareness of other issues." And she said that when Tory prime minister Boris Johnson is so openly transphobic, it gives cover for other people to be.

Some protesters wanted more than equal rights under capitalism—they wanted full liberation and real change.

Dan explained, "Because of the system, oppressions are interlocked. So fighting for trans liberation is also part of the fight for black, women's and gay liberation."

"We're not all free until the last of us is free."

"We have to fight for liberation outside the system. We cannot be liberated if we stay here fighting within the status quo."

"So the idea that trans people are a threat to women's rights is wrong—we're not fighting for a limited cake of rights."

The growing support for trans+ rights is impressive and resistance to transphobia is vital to push back the bigots.

Winning trans rights now as well as full liberation will require more expressions of rage at the system and a focus on class unity.

Isabel Ringrose



Marching for trans rights in central London last Saturday

PICTURES: GUY SMALLMAN

## Socialist Worker WHAT WE THINK

# DIVISIONS AT TOP SHOULD OPEN DOOR FOR STRUGGLE

**B**ORIS JOHNSON would like to take credit for Matt Hancock's resignation as health secretary.

Speaking to reporters on Monday, he shamelessly tried to imply he had sacked Hancock after the former health secretary's relationship with an aide was revealed.

In fact, Johnson tried almost immediately to declare the matter "closed" after the story broke.

It was only after questions about Gina Coladangelo's appointments to positions in Hancock's department (see page 3) wouldn't go away that he resigned.

Now some pundits say that Johnson is trying to wrestle back control of the story from his own former aide—now enemy—Dominic Cummings. The whole thing is a scandal manufactured by Cummings, exposing his old boss's dirty secrets.

But what the infighting really reveals is how no one at the top is in control of anything.

Faced with a pandemic that demands a break from all the normal functions of capitalist society—the Tories are in disarray. The chaos is made worse by

the bosses demanding functions resume as soon as possible.

They've never had a clue how to manage these two completely opposing demands. Now, as they fling dirt at each other, they're revealing the corrupt ways they've always run society.

The Labour Party should be able to make hay from this. Instead the Tories looked likely to win a seat in a by-election that Labour should never have been able to lose (see page 20.) Labour also has no clue how to respond to the crisis.

What it's come up with is a refusal to challenge Johnson, mixed with right wing politics dressed up in the language of community, family and national values. It's a failure.

**What the infighting really reveals is how no one at the top is in control**

# RESIST RACIST TORY RULES

**E**U CITIZENS and refugees are feeling the sharp impact of the Tories' racist immigration clampdown. This Wednesday was the deadline for EU citizens to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme, which protects rights such as employment and healthcare in Britain.

But as the deadline fast approaches tens of thousands are still yet to apply. This includes around 70,000 who claim benefits such as Universal Credit.

In the final week before the

scheme shuts, around 12,000 applications were being made daily with helplines jammed.

Despite calls for the deadline to be extended, the Home Office has refused. It claims this would create further "uncertainty".

Meanwhile home secretary Priti Patel is set to publish the legislation that will implement the overhaul of Britain's asylum system some time next week.

It may include plans to move asylum seekers from Britain to another country while their claims

Beneath all this is a discontent felt throughout society, rooted in decades of attacks on ordinary people's jobs and living standards.

It means that in places where people once voted strongly for Labour, some now abandon it.

The tens of thousands of people who marched against lockdown restrictions (see page 6) is another expression of this. The march brought together a mixture of pent-up frustrations at those at the top but pointed it in dangerous directions.

The organised left—which still too often sees politics through the prism of the Labour Party—has not grown out of the crisis at the top.

And union leaders are more focussed on defending their influence in Labour than in organising struggle.

There have been explosions of struggle—most obviously Black Lives Matter and Kill the Bill, as well as large marches for Trans rights, or action on climate change.

But a sufficiently large organisation to draw these struggles together is missing.

Building one means breaking from a focus on the Labour Party and building a mass movement of resistance instead.

are still pending. Ministers had "a slightly long phone call" with the Danish government, who are hoping to set up a centre to process asylum applications in Africa.

Patel is also still looking for a way to remove refugees who flee to Britain "illegally" back to a "safe" country they crossed during their route.

Ramping up nationalism and pushing forward with attacks on immigrants is part of the Tories' nasty and dangerous racism. It must be resisted at every turn.

## Breakfast in



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## ANALYSIS

ALEX CALLINICOS



# China's champions of state capitalism

**ZHENG ZEGUANG, the Chinese ambassador to Britain, recently tweeted a picture of him visiting Karl Marx's grave in Highgate, London. This was to celebrate the centenary of the foundation of the Communist Party of China (CPC).**

From any standpoint the CPC's is an extraordinary story. Starting as a handful of persecuted radical intellectuals meeting in semi-colonial Shanghai, to becoming the ruler of the second biggest economy in the world.

The politics of the CPC's triumph are relatively clear. Within a few years of its formation, the party was at the centre of a huge and militant workers' movement sparked by a police massacre in colonial Hong Kong. It was allied to the mainstream nationalist movement the Guomindang, led by Chiang Kai-shek. But in 1927 Chiang turned on the CPC and slaughtered its activists.

Driven from the cities, the CPC re-emerged eventually in the mid-1930s as a rural guerrilla force led by Mao Zedong. Mao skilfully exploited the disastrous Japanese attempt to conquer China from 1937 onwards to force Chiang increasingly onto the defensive. Mao manoeuvred between the efforts to control him by the two emerging superpowers, the Soviet Union and the United States. Sometimes he leaned towards one, and sometimes towards the other.

In October 1949 the CPC took power and proclaimed the People's Republic of China. Mao declared, "The Chinese people have stood up!" But his prime objective was to free China from the imperialist powers that had dominated and partitioned it in the 19th century. This meant, above all, achieving economic self-sufficiency—not workers' self-emancipation.

Tony Cliff wrote in 1957 that "the thread running through the entire economic and political development of Mao's China is the effort of an elite to goad the people into building a magnificent economic-military machine on a backward, narrow agricultural foundation."

## Squeeze

As Isabella Weber puts it in her important new book *How China Escaped Shock Therapy*, "The Mao era price system functioned as a central mechanism to squeeze resources for urban industrialization out of the countryside."

"Agricultural purchase prices were kept below their value, peasants working the same hours as urban workers achieved a lower material living standard." Despite many upheavals, this drive to build state capitalism laid the basis of a modern industrial economy by the time of Mao's death in 1976.

But China remained a very poor country—with no significant increase in its share of global output since the revolution.

Mao's eventual successor Deng Xiaoping decided both to encourage peasant production by relying more on market mechanisms and to open up to global capitalism.

Two crucial decisions took place under Deng. First, as Weber shows, the regime did not give way to the siren song of neoliberal economists. It did not embrace "shock therapy"—switching overnight to an entirely unregulated system of market prices. This reflected the determination of the CPC leadership to retain overall political and economic control.

Secondly, the regime allowed Western transnational corporations to use China as a low-cost platform for producing goods for the world market. It was this move that eventually led to China becoming the world's largest manufacturing and exporting economy.

But—to the fury of Western politicians—the CPC is still in control. Under president Xi Jinping, the regime has become ideologically shriller, geopolitically more assertive, and domestically more authoritarian than Deng thought prudent. The party-state bureaucracy continues to dominate the economy. It does this directly through state owned enterprises and indirectly via influence on nominally private corporations.

China's capitalists are among the richest and most powerful in the world, but they are still tied to the CPC by multiple visible and concealed links. And China is ever more clearly the US's greatest rival. This is why president Joe Biden says the US must win the 21st century from Xi's "autocracy".

But Wall St doesn't seem to mind the CPC's continued hegemony. The big US banks are pouring into China to reach its vast pool of savings.

The love affair between Chinese "communism" and Western capitalism isn't over yet.

**ANTI-LOCKDOWN PROTESTERS** in London last week brought together people with very different ideologies

# Anti-lockdown protest was contradictory pull to right

by **SOPHIE SQUIRE**

**AT least 30,000 demonstrators marched through central London on Saturday to call for an end to lockdown.**

The "Freedom Day" march demanded an immediate end to all Covid-19 restrictions.

Protesters gathered initially at Marble Arch and then marched to Downing Street where they flung tennis balls with messages written on them towards Boris Johnson's residence.

It was shot through with contradictory messages, but underscored the emptiness at the heart of parliamentary politics.

Present were supporters of Donald Trump and the far right, and others from fascist and racist groups

These people were among a section who abused protesters at the People's Assembly and Trans+ Pride demonstrations also held on Saturday in central London.

However, it was not a far right demonstration. And it did not feel like the early days of the Football Lads Alliance that was quickly revealed to be a vehicle for the fascists.

Some present accept the hugely dangerous argument that Covid-19 is a myth, or that at least it is being grossly overemphasised.

Another grouping has swallowed fake anti-vaccine conspiracy theories that also

tend towards beliefs of a secret elite running the word.

Stickers, banners and T-shirts worn by protesters alluded to QAnon and other antisemitic conspiracy theories.

But one large element present were people who have been hit hard by the lockdown and the lack of economic support. These included workers and small business owners.

And there were also quite a lot of young people who are frustrated by the months of lockdown and police crackdowns on raves.

Shirley, who is a librarian, said, "I'd rather be doing something else with my

weekend but I'm going to keep coming on these protests because I don't trust what the government is doing.

"I don't believe in wearing masks and I don't believe in the vaccine, especially given my Caribbean heritage and the history of slavery."

"There's a huge mix of people here, yet what they're saying is being ignored."

## Anger

There was also lots of anger over the hypocrisy of the Tories who insist everyone else obeys Covid-19 rules but then ignore them themselves.

And there were calls to "arrest Matt Hancock".

None of this makes it

in any way a progressive movement—far from it. Its direction is rightwards.

Such demonstrations have emerged at a time of deep economic and social crisis when many people's lives are turned upside down.

It is easier for right wing ideas to spread because there is so little opposition from the Labour Party and the trade union leaders.

The anger against Johnson therefore finds other outlets.

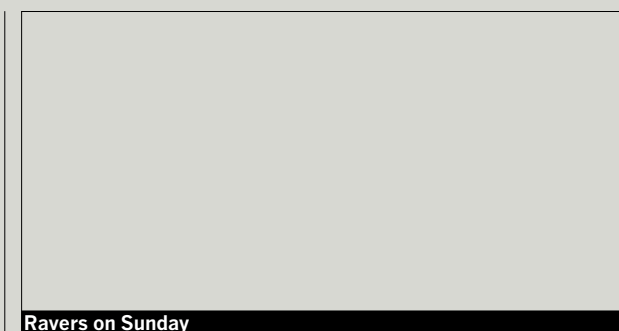
It was clear from Saturday that the left needs to stay vigilant about anti-lockdown protests.

And it is vital that the left should be the loudest voice in the fight against the Tories.

# Protest demands freedom to party

**THOUSANDS of protesters, angry with the government's abandonment of the entertainment industry, danced in front of a sound system in central London on Sunday.**

The Save Our Scene group wrote on Instagram, "We are demanding that the government ends all restrictions on the hospitality sector without any further delay. "We can't stay silent anymore." This group made the choice not



Ravers on Sunday

to join the Freedom March on Saturday. But regulations based on science are still necessary. Instead of

demanding the immediate end to regulations, the call should be for proper economic support for everyone hit by closures.



# Keep up the fight after Atkinson verdict

For the first time in 35 years a cop has been found guilty of manslaughter. But, says Isabel Ringrose, the fight against institutional racism must continue

**A POLICE officer has been found guilty of the manslaughter of Dalian Atkinson.**

Former footballer Atkinson died in 2016 in Telford, Shropshire, following the use of force by West Mercia police officers.

PC Benjamin Monk was charged with both murder and manslaughter. After 18 hours and 48 minutes of deliberation, the jury returned a unanimous verdict of guilty to manslaughter. The murder charge was cleared.

The charity Inquest says until now no cop had been found guilty of murder or manslaughter following police contact in England and Wales in 35 years.

Pc Mary Ellen Bettley-Smith was charged with assault occasioning actual bodily harm, but the jury failed to reach a verdict. Prosecutors were deciding whether to seek a re-trial as Socialist Worker went to press.

Jurors were directed by the judge to find Monk guilty of murder only if they were sure he intended to cause serious injury. They were also instructed to find an alternative charge of manslaughter.

## Unacceptable

Following the verdict, Atkinson's family said the fact that the case has taken nearly five years to get to trial "is completely unacceptable".

"It has been even harder to sit through this trial and to hear PC Monk try to justify the force he used," they added.

"On the night he died, Dalian was vulnerable and unwell and needed medical attention. He instead received violence."

Monk Tasered Atkinson three times. Two attempts were unsuccessful, but the third lasted six times longer than standard after Monk overrode the safety button.

He also kicked Atkinson at least twice in the head with such force

## BACK STORY

**PC Benjamin Monk is awaiting sentencing after being convicted for the manslaughter of former professional footballer Dalian Atkinson**

● Monk is the first cop to be found guilty of killing a civilian while on duty for 35 years

● Jurors failed to reach a verdict on co-accused PC Mary Ellen Bettley-Smith

that it left bootlace marks on Atkinson.

Monk claimed Atkinson was trying to get up when he kicked in self-defence as a last resort. But prosecutors said Monk lied about the number of kicks in an interview days afterwards by claiming he could remember only one, aimed at his shoulder.

Monk also said he had no recollection of placing his foot on Atkinson's head, despite witness accounts. Kate Maynard from Hickman and Rose solicitors, who represents Atkinson's family, called the conviction "a landmark".

And Deborah Coles, Director of Inquest, said the verdict "sends a strong message that the police are not above the law". "However, the prosecution of a few police officers does not address the racism and discrimination embedded in policing," she said.

She added, this is "not an isolated case, but part of a systemic problem". Black men, especially in mental health crises "have disproportionately died following use of force."

The guilty verdict should be celebrated. But as with Derick Chauvin's guilty verdict of the murder of George Floyd in the US, it does not mean the fight against institutional racism and the police is over.

Anti-racists must continue to fight for all victims of police brutality.

**THE TORIES want to clampdown on protests, such as this Black Lives Matter demonstration in London last year where thousands declared the police were institutionally racist**

## More action needed as Tories' hated anti-protest bill is back in Commons

THE TORIES' protest-smashing bill is due back in the House of Commons next week for discussion on amendments following the committee stage.

MPs will also have the chance to suggest new amendments to the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill—and then the bill will move to its third reading.

The committee stage saw sections of the Bill examined in detail, debated and voted on.

The bill includes plans to restrict the right to protest, clamp down on the rights of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers and more powers for police to stop and search.

Debates on Part Three of the bill—involving the restrictions on protest—saw MPs ask for clarity on "the issue of noise". Under the bill protests will not be allowed to go ahead if they're too loud.

Tory Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department Victoria Atkins said, "The senior officer must decide whether the impact is significant."

Intentionally causing a public nuisance—which includes causing "serious annoyance" was also voted through by all but two of the committee. The Joint Committee on



Human Rights published a report last week raising concerns about clampdowns on the right to protest.

It slammed the proposed rule to allow the police to put conditions on protest that cause a disturbance as neither "necessary nor proportionate".

"There is a real risk that more substantial penalties would have the effect of dissuading people from exercising their right to engage in peaceful protest," the report warns.

In debates about the planned attacks on Travellers, Tory MP Lee Anderson claimed "that there is a direct correlation between Travellers being in the area and

crime going up". Labour MP Bambos Charalambous said these are some "of the many prejudices that exist about the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities". He added it may lead to "people invoking some of the clauses in the Bill in order to criminalise people."

Kill the Bill protests have already seen thousands take to the streets across the country in outrage at the Tories' plans.

Bigger and more militant protests are needed again.

Join the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller protest in Parliament Square on Wednesday 7 July, 1pm. Details [drive2survive.org.uk](https://drive2survive.org.uk)



## ROUND UP

### Heat wave shows climate danger

A HEAT wave across the US Pacific northwest is a reminder of how climate change can lead to weather events that are potentially “life-endangering”.

The temperature in Portland, Oregon reached 43.3 degrees Celsius, which is the highest ever recorded in the region.

There were power shortages as a result of the heat and Portland General Electric said that 3,000 of its customers had been left without power.

Across the US heat warnings have been issued in California, Nevada, Utah and Arizona and a number of wildfires have been sparked in the south west of the country.

Extreme temperatures will only become a more common occurrence if the climate crisis isn't taken seriously.

### More Indigenous graves found

FOUR CATHOLIC churches, built on Indigenous land, have been burnt down in the past two weeks in western Canada.

The fires at St Ann's Church and the Chopaka Church in British Columbia come after over 700 more unmarked graves were discovered at a residential school in southern Saskatchewan.

The residential school in Cowessess ran from 1899 until 1997. Two other churches were burnt on the day that Canada celebrated National Indigenous People's Day.

The school was one of over 100 residential schools, set up and funded by the state, to separate Indigenous children from their families and rob them of their culture.

### Prisoners freed in Catalonia

NINE CATALAN political prisoners walked free on Wednesday of last week after being pardoned by Spanish prime minister Pedro Sanchez.

They include six former ministers in the Catalan government, two leaders of civil society organisations and the former speaker of the Catalan parliament.

The nine were arrested in the wake of the 2017 Catalan independence referendum for their involvement in organising the vote, demonstrations and mass civil disobedience.

In 2019, the nine were sentenced to up to 13 years in prison. The pardons are only partial.

The nine are barred from holding office and the pardons could be reversed any time for at least the next four years.

Read more at [bit.ly/CatalanNine](https://bit.ly/CatalanNine)

# Protesters show anger at Palestinian Authority

by NICK CLARK

**THE PALESTINIAN Authority (PA) has launched a crackdown on protesters and activists in West Bank cities.**

Thousands of people marched in the West Bank city of Ramallah on Friday, Saturday and Sunday of last week.

Protesters are angry at the PA for arresting prominent activists, and for failing to resist Israel's occupation of Palestine.

They called for PA president Mahmoud Abbas to resign.

They also chanted “The people want to overthrow the regime”—the slogan of Arab Revolutions ten years ago.

PA security forces—some in riot gear, some in plain clothes—beat them with clubs and fists, and shot them with rubber bullets and tear gas.

The marches were called after the PA arrested several prominent activists—including Nizar Banat, who cops apparently beat to death while in custody.

It comes after thousands of people across Palestine rose up against Israel in May of this year.

The uprising was so large and popular that it forced the PA to support it by organising marches during a general strike.

But now the PA wants to negotiate with the US and Israel—and is trying to silence activists who criticise it and want more resistance.

Its crackdown follows a meeting in May between Abbas and US secretary of state Anthony Blinken, who said he wanted to “empower” the PA.

The PA hopes that by cooperating with Israel and the US it will be allowed to create a state in a small part of Palestine.

The PA was formed after a deal with the US and Israel in 1993, when Palestinian politicians agreed to end resistance to Israel's occupation.

Israel gave the PA limited rule in some areas of the West Bank, which it has occupied militarily since 1967.

In return, the PA helped Israel control the West Bank—and hold back Palestinian resistance.

But Israel never had any intention of letting the PA set up a state. Instead it has tightened its grip on the West Bank by building more town-like settlements for Israeli citizens to live on Palestinian land.

Now the PA is in crisis, and has little support among ordinary Palestinians.

It had been set to hold elections this year—its first since 2006—but Abbas cancelled them when it looked likely that he would lose.

A poll published by the Palestinian Centre for Policy and Research in June found that

56 percent of Palestinians see the PA as a burden.

It also found support for armed struggle against Israel, and Palestinian groups associated with resistance such as Hamas, has risen after May's uprising.

The mass protests and strikes across all of Palestine marked a new beginning for resistance to Israel among ordinary Palestinians.

Current protests in the West Bank show that their resistance is continuing—including against the “official” Palestinian leaders who want to stamp it out.

**PROTESTERS IN Ramallah called for president Abbas to resign**

## Reject Tory nationalism after British and Russian naval clash

by CHARLIE KIMBER

**BRITISH AND Russian warships violently confronted each other in the Black Sea last week.**

The incident underlines the dangers of the Tories' aggressive nationalism—and how imperialist rivalries constantly threaten war.

The Russian defence ministry claimed a patrol ship fired warning shots and a Sukhoi Su-24 attack aircraft dropped bombs to chase away HMS Defender.

The British vessel entered waters off the Crimean coast, ignored several warnings and made a 3-kilometre incursion near Cape Fiolent on the southern tip of the peninsula.

Last Thursday, Boris Johnson said the route was “wholly

appropriate” and the destroyer was “sticking up for our values”.

The Financial Times newspaper reported “British and Ukrainian officials met on board the destroyer on Tuesday to agree a defence deal” with Britain helping “boost Ukraine's naval capabilities”.

Such a deal was certain to anger Russia's rulers. Certainly

the government wants to constantly push nationalism.

We were told it is “One Britain One Nation Day” last Friday. Children were “encouraged” to sing a song with lyrics including, “We are Britain and we have one dream, to unite all people in one great team.”

HMS Defender is part of a flotilla supporting Britain's new aircraft carrier, HMS Queen Elizabeth, which is on its first mission. The task force includes submarines, attack aircraft, and British and US soldiers.

And the Carrier Strike Group 21 (CSG21) left Britain last month on a six-month trip to highly-contested areas such as the South China sea.

On its way to raise tensions with China, HMS Defender dropped off from the group to contest with Russia. The

Ministry of Defence described CSG21 in April as “the largest concentration of maritime and air power” to ever leave Britain.

But, after being reminded about the Falklands fleet of 1982, it changed the claim to be the biggest “in a generation”.

Eighteen warplanes, including British 35B Lightning Stealth jets and US F35B jets were deployed the week before. The CSG 21 commander Steve Moorhouse, said it was a “significant moment”.

This is a new level of military alliance that is designed to fit a world of sharp imperialist rivalries with China and Russia.

The Tories say they are insisting on “freedom of navigation of the seas”. In reality, they are whipping up an increasingly dangerous nationalism.

HMS Defender



## Liberation, not rainbow capitalism

WE SHOULD remember that we celebrate Pride in June because on 28 June 1969, LGBT+ New Yorkers fought back against police brutality.

This was triggered by a police raid at the Stonewall Inn, in Greenwich Village, New York.

Pride's roots link LGBT+ struggle to other fights such as working class struggle and anti-racism—those who were also under attack from the police for simply existing.

Without black, trans women such as Marsha P. Johnson, events such as Pride and LGBT+ rights would not be what they are today.

But Pride is changing. Companies and big businesses target it, all in the name of profit, not solidarity.

"Rainbow capitalism" is the forceful incorporation of the LGBT+ movement into consumerism to make a profit.

This fits directly into "pinkwashing", a tactic used by governments and organisations to distract from negative actions they have taken.

Both rainbow capitalism and pinkwashing are harmful to LGBT+ people.

They commercialise our identities, our experiences and even our oppression.

This creates the false belief that the fight for our rights is "done".

Rainbow capitalism will never achieve liberation.

Only dismantling the oppressive capitalist and colonialist system will.

Alex Bright  
Black Country

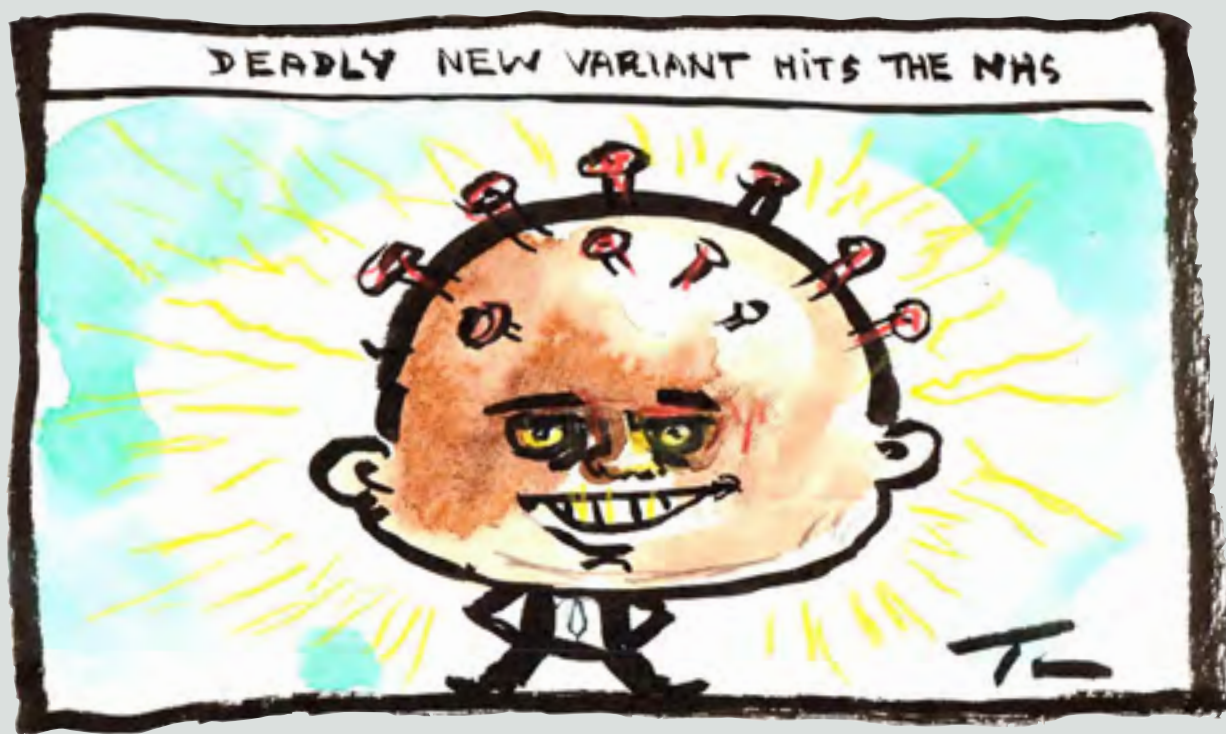


ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

## John Bercow joining Labour signals its rightward shift

THE SHADOW Justice minister Karl Turner is "delighted" that the last speaker of the House of Commons, John Bercow has defected from the Tories to join Labour. This is a view strangely echoed by John McDonnell.

There is of course no doubt that Bercow has travelled a significant political distance from his "rabid right wing days".

He was a member of the racist Monday club in his youth which hankered for the lethal days of the British Empire.

In contrast to Boris Johnson, Bercow claims that Labour leader Keir Starmer is "decent, honourable and intelligent".

This assessment will come as news to the Palestinians as they

suffer the Israeli onslaught with hardly a word of condemnation from Starmer.

It's also news to Muslims, as he stalls on tackling Islamophobia within the Party.

And health workers who, according to Starmer, should settle for an insulting 2 percent pay rise.

On top of all this there is Starmer's exclusion of Jeremy Corbyn from the Parliamentary Labour Party which appears to stretch into the distant future.

There's not much sign of honour or decency there.

Bercow probably joined Labour as a way to get the peerage that Boris Johnson denied him.

But more importantly, he did so because Labour without Jeremy

Corbyn, his supporters and policies is safe, middle of the road and a dependable ally of the ruling class.

For Starmer and the shadow cabinet, Bercow is a useful symbol of how far Labour has moved right.

It's also worth recalling that Starmer and Bercow were soul mates as ardent Remainers within the neoliberal, anti-migrant EU.

Delight at his defection is a warning for all of us on the Left.

We cannot look to Starmer's and Bercow's Labour to help us resist what the Tories have in mind for the rest of us—whether it is climate change, more austerity, more racism and much else.

Paul Holborow,  
North London

Just a thought...

## Solidarity is our strength

THANK YOU to the person selling Socialist Worker on our picket line at Edinburgh Waverley station.

We are the RMT union members who are striking against a pay freeze imposed by the bosses at Serco Caledonian Sleeper.

We appreciated your person standing with us and having a nice chat about union history and his own life as a union member.

It was great to have the solidarity.

Gordon Kerr  
Edinburgh

## Batley election sparks no hope

WHAT OPTION does the left have in the Batley and Spen by-election?

There are 16 candidates standing yet my reaction is to yawn.

Working class voters want a clear position in support of Palestinian rights and an end to austerity.

These are not coming from Labour.

It seems we are left with the reactionary George Galloway.

Or is there some alternative?

Joe Collins,  
Derbyshire

## Hospitality workers' fight

I WAS sacked for defending my colleague's pay and conditions.

Apart from this just being ridiculous, it's a microcosm of a much wider issue.

Hospitality workers are treated as disposable and are consistently exploited—given no chance to fight for their rights.

Zero hour contracts and unpaid trials need to stop.

We need to organise and unionise.

Heidi Henders  
East London

## Don't forget repression

I WAS a child in Iran and I can never forget those years.

My family was imprisoned and my cousin was facing execution.

I do not forgive and I do not forget.

Siamak  
On Facebook

## GB News—is it a case to keep TV licences?

IT'S CLEAR, the main role for GB News is to be an ideological hand grenade into the British media with openly opinionated programming.

Andrew Neil, founder of GB News, has insisted his new TV station shouldn't be compared to Fox News.

Perhaps Neil doesn't want it to be associated with the tarnished Donald Trump brand.

Yet everything about the channel screams culture wars.

Even his rant about

advertisers pulling out is laced with anti-woke rhetoric.

The serious point is that pressure on GB News could be put on other broadcasters.

If they believe they may lose viewers they will be tempted to tack right themselves.

That's why, as much as we should criticise the BBC, it's wrong to call for an end to the licence fee.

Right now, the alternative is far worse.

Anonymous,  
Media Worker

## The royal yacht is a gross royal insult

AT A time when NHS workers have been denied a real pay rise, a royal yacht costing up to £1 billion is on the cards.

It's a huge middle finger to the Black Lives Matter movement who, in the last few years, have confronted the racist legacy of the royals.

The previous royal yacht, HMY Britannia was lauded as a "hospital ship" which could be used to rescue good Brits in a potential war. But it was never used for this purpose.

The yacht was a floating palace—not a hospital—used for royal honeymoons

and diplomatic ocean piss-ups.

Forbes said in April a new royal yacht could "advance western interests".

This always means ruling class interests.

The royal's interests could not possibly be more detached from the interests of the working class.

Why do we invest so much in the monarchy anyway?

Boris Johnson said as foreign secretary in 2016, this was "not a priority", so why now during the pandemic?

As socialists, we should

join calls to disband the monarchy altogether, redistribute their land and wealth in the interests of everyone else.

Josh Largent,  
East London

# GIVING VOICE TO VICTIMS

## DIRECTOR **KEN FERO** TALKS TO SOCIALIST WORKER ABOUT HIS NEW FILM

**W**HEN DIRECTOR Ken Fero's landmark documentary film *Injustice* was released in cinemas 20 years ago, the police went on a legal rampage. Their lawyers chased down cinemas that planned to show the film and threatened them until they withdrew (see box).

Even small, ticket-only, showings at the well-known haunts of the left were cancelled by venues out of fear.

Nevertheless, the depiction of state violence, directed primarily at black people, struck a chord with so many people that *Injustice* was shown at all sorts of impromptu events. The film's audience grew organically, despite the crackdown.

Now, Fero is back with a new film, *Ultraviolence*, and once again police killings are the main focus.

Using interviews with the victim's families, sometimes intercut with actual CCTV footage of their loved ones dying in police custody, the film is tough to watch.

"We want people to be disturbed," Fero told *Socialist Worker*. "The decision to put this footage in was agreed with the families—and it cannot be as distressing for anyone in the audience as it is for them."

"We can see with the George Floyd case how it impacted people, and people are traumatised."

"But the question is what to do about the situation. It's not about the films. It's not about filmmaking. What's important are the demands for justice."

Part of Fero's objective is to spread the word of cases highlighted by *Ultraviolence* to a new generation.

He takes heart and inspiration from the Black Lives Matter movement, but he also thinks there are things to be learned from past struggles.

"I think history is important in any struggle," says Fero. "The importance

of knowing about these cases is, if you don't know your history, you don't know where to go in the future."

"The other important thing is that the way the state and the mainstream media handle this issue is to always move on from the death. They're always drawing a line. The lines can be heavy, like a public inquiry. It could be a light line, but it's a line."

"But the families don't recognise those lines. They don't respect statutes of limitation. So the film is really to say to [new activists], some people did fight before, and there were victories, and it is possible to win."

Fero also has warnings for campaigners today.

"We need to look at fundamental things, such as language," he says. "'The UK is not innocent' is a slogan that's going around. That's quite a liberal slogan, because the slogan that I use is, 'The UK is guilty'. There's a difference."

"Look, for instance, at Malcolm X. Every time he was on television he had the ability to completely turn around [an interviewer's] loaded question that was based on attacking him and the Black Power movement."

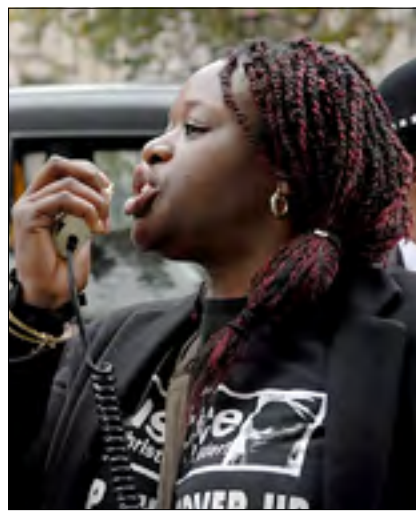
"So for example, he would be asked, 'Do you condone the violence of the movement?', and he would reply, 'No, I don't condone the violence of the police.'"



**Ultraviolence is told as though it were a letter from one generation to the next**

Janet Alder (right) has led a fearless campaign for justice after her brother Christopher died in Hull police station in 1998. She features in Ken Fero's new film *Ultraviolence* (below) could turn around interviewers' loaded questions

CREDIT (RIGHT): GUY SMALLMAN



"This terminology of 'deaths in police custody' is very soft, and was brought in by the liberal organisations that negotiate with the state but never get anywhere. We should be using the term 'police killings' instead."

"But there are lots for people like me to learn from the new movement."

"I'm not the kind of person that berates people for not knowing history if that history is not taught in schools. They don't know because they haven't been taught, and they haven't been taught for a reason."

"That's a specific reason in terms of ideology, and in terms of control."

A key narrative in *Ultraviolence* is told as though it were a letter from one generation of anti-racists to the next.

"The film is, in a way, a kind of apology," says Fero. "Not for the people who are fighting, but an apology to our children for the people that didn't fight."

"That puts a kind of responsibility on older people. The film is aimed towards younger people, sure. But it also asks people, if your kids are on the street and campaigning for racial justice and other issues, why are you not with

them? We have to accept responsibility as a generation."

One of the striking features of *Ultraviolence* is the way it makes a link between domestic state violence and imperialist violence on a global scale. Fero says this is a vital point that isn't made often enough.

He adds, "Of course, it's a very different case when a soldier is killed in Amarah province in Iraq by the resistance to British imperialism, to a death in custody, but there are connections."

"There's an organic part to it. Janet Alder's brother, Christopher, was a paratrooper. He was killed by the police—so there's a direct connection there."

"And, when Janet Alder campaigned for a seat in the general election, she campaigned on an anti-war and pro-justice platform. That's a real connection, not theory."

"There are also connections in the unity between families of soldiers who are betrayed by the state, families of Iraqis who are murdered by soldiers of the state, and families in the UK."

"At the moment, this may be a minority position. But it wasn't a minority position thirty or forty years ago. Positions change depending on what people do."

*Ultraviolence* is a film made for changing times, and Fero is hopeful for the future.

"We can see within young people that they have had enough, they won't accept things anymore, and their demands are radical," he says.

"They're not interested in negotiating with the state. They're not interested in improving the system. They're talking about dismantling things."

"They want to dismantle systems and countries and everything else. And that is quite revolutionary when you think it's coming from people who were not born in a period of struggle."

"Ultraviolence is a film of its time. We're lucky, it takes years to edit, it just happens to be coming out right now."



# TIMES OF KILLER COPS

## ABOUT INJUSTICE AND HIS NEW FILM ULTRAVIOLENCE

### Showing Injustice was resistance

ONE OF the main slogans on the streets during the Black Lives Matter movement last year was “Silence = violence”.

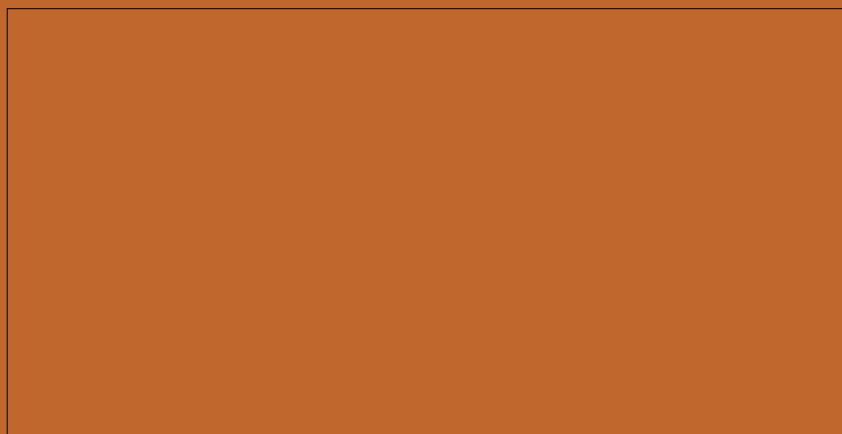
Fero says that the position that Channel 4 and the BBC took by not screening Injustice was an act of silencing, and therefore of violence. “It allowed other acts of violence, committed by the police, it allowed killing by the police to continue,” he says.

“If Injustice had been shown on TV 20 years ago, it would have had more of an impact on policing. There would have been a bigger public outcry and something would have been done. Some of the people that have been killed since then could be alive today.”

The mainstream media act as gatekeepers for the system, says Fero. Rather than questioning the state, they are there to protect it. “When we made the film, we looked at our history,” he said. “We looked at what Malcolm X did in the 1960s. He went to the United Nations and said, it’s ridiculous to talk about civil rights when we don’t even have our human rights. “We used that argument within Injustice.

“Second, we named and showed the police officers, together with the evidence, and said they were responsible for manslaughter and murder.

“That is something the media don’t do because of libel laws. But we asked whether the right to life is more important than the law



Ken Fero (right) with Marcia Rigg addressing campaigners from the United Families and Friends Campaign in 2017. Marcia’s brother Sean died in 2008 while in police custody

of libel. And what happened with the film? Police solicitors legally threatened lots of cinemas and accused us of incitement to riot, and libel.

“So, we showed the film to the police officers implicated in the murder and manslaughter of these British citizens, and we told them if they didn’t stop harassing us and the cinemas, we would take them to court for loss of earnings.

“They then realised that they would have to stand in court and answer questions that they’d avoided for the past 30 years. And when we made that statement, it stopped dead. No more threats and the film got shown, and then became massive.”

The impact of the Injustice was huge. Many of the screenings were

filled with young black people who had very few chances to explain what the police had done to them and their families. It was as though the film had given them, for perhaps the first time, a space to express their feelings.

“We had decided we wouldn’t work within the parameters,” says Fero. “We refused the guidelines, and we had to do that because this was our only chance. And that’s why the film had the impact it had.”

Fero acknowledges that politically we now live in a “different time”, but he has hopes that Ultraviolence will have a similar effect.

“The new film is not just to sit and watch,” he says. “It’s for people to take action.”

### Passing the rebellion to a new generation

#### ULTRAVIOLENCE

Directed by Ken Fero  
Released in cinemas on 25 June and 5 July on BFI player

THIS IS guerrilla cinema made amid a war with the state. The polished editing and the CGI effects of big-budget cinema have no place here. Instead, we have the raw voices of loved ones who have lost people to police killings.

Janet Alder’s campaigning will doubtless be familiar to many Socialist Worker readers. But to hear her story alongside apparently mundane police station footage puts it in a new light.

There on the floor of a custody suite reception, partly obscured by a desk, her brother lies dying while cops chat away. His last moans are barely noticed by the officers.

Then there are the meetings between bereaved families and the Independent Police Complaints Commission. The dry words of bureaucrats hang in the still air of cupboard-like rooms.

Everybody there knows there’ll be no justice through the system.

The only relief comes from the resistance. The countless meetings and protests keep the cases in people’s minds and grate on the nerves of the state.

Ultraviolence looks back at some of the most important cases of injustice in recent years.

It links them to the broader system of violence that has given us relentless war abroad and oppression at home.

It’s not easy to watch but will help pass the baton of rebellion from one generation to the next.

David Oluwale (top) was hounded to his death by police officers Kenneth Kitching (middle) and Geoffrey Ellerker in Leeds in 1969. Both cops received prison sentences for assault

## WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

### INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

### REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

### THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

### INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties. We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women.

We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We oppose discrimination against disabled people including those who experience mental distress.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

### THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests.

We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to [www.swp.org.uk](http://www.swp.org.uk) or phone 020 7840 5602

# Socialist Workers Party online meetings



A LASH-UP between Keir Starmer and the Lib Dems is a bad idea

## Can a 'progressive alliance' beat the Tories?

**BRADFORD**  
Thu 1 July, 7.30pm  
881-4770-0676

**EAST MIDLANDS**  
Wed 7 July, 7pm  
354-874-4790

**LEEDS**  
Thu 8 July, 7pm  
881-4770-0676

**BIRMINGHAM**  
**The bloody role of Western imperialism in Palestine and the Middle East**  
Wed 7 July, 7pm  
281-634-5938

**BOURNEMOUTH**  
**China and the US—imperialism and the changing balance of power**  
Wed 7 July, 7.30pm  
8682-810-8409

**BRIGHTON & HOVE**  
**The US, China and the new imperialism**  
Thu 8 July, 6.30pm  
841-2142-3683

**BRISTOL**  
**The politics of COP—why is the process failing to tackle climate crisis?**  
Thu 8 July, 7.30pm  
688-397-3148

**BURNLEY & PENDLE**  
**Schools, racism and class**  
Wed 7 July, 7.30pm  
446-409-5118

**CAMBRIDGE**  
**Beyond the binary—Marxism, gender and resistance**  
Thu 8 July, 7.30pm  
681-800-4408

**CARDIFF**  
**Neoliberal collapse and the growth of the far right**  
Wed 7 July, 7.30pm  
630-181-4857

**CHESTERFIELD**  
**The US, China and the new imperialism**  
Thu 8 July, 7pm  
828-532-8731

**COVENTRY**  
**Imperialism—the highest stage of capitalism**  
Wed 7 July, 7.30pm  
823-945-1917

**CREWE & STOKE-ON-TRENT**  
**Trade unions and workers' pay—can we make the bosses pay up?**  
Wed 7 July, 7.30pm  
895-5421-4265

**DEVON & CORNWALL**  
**Socialists and the trade unions**  
Thu 8 July, 7.30pm  
865-2972-2883

**DUNDEE, ABERDEEN & PERTH**  
**Marxism and religion—more than just opium?**  
Wed 7 July, 7.30pm  
894-2628-7708

**EDINBURGH**  
**Capitalism and the politics of sport**  
Wed 14 July, 7.30pm  
431-459-112

**GLASGOW**  
**The radical roots of Pride**  
Thu 8 July, 7pm  
879-2402-3259

**HASTINGS**  
**Is human nature a barrier to socialism?**  
Wed 7 July, 7pm  
871-7107-4592

**HOME COUNTIES**  
**China and the US—imperialism and the changing balance of power**  
Thu 8 July, 6.30pm  
872-4922-1957

**HUDDERSFIELD**  
**The Covid-19 crisis and how we fight for a new normal**  
Wed 7 July, 6.30pm  
290-168-1804

**KENT**  
**What is Zionism?**  
Thu 8 July, 8.15pm  
434-623-8064

**LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE**  
**Anarchism and socialism—are they different and does it matter?**  
Thu 8 July, 7pm  
992-204-9372

**LIVERPOOL**  
**A rebel's guide to George Orwell**  
Wed 7 July, 7pm  
493-925-5919

**LONDON: HACKNEY**  
**Can the police be reformed?**  
Thu 8 July, 7.30pm  
854-8245-8715

**LONDON: HARINGEY**  
**From the Olympics to 'taking the knee'—capitalism and sport**  
Wed 7 July, 7.30pm  
459-388-1576

**LONDON: ISLINGTON**  
**The roots of Islamophobia**  
Thu 8 July, 7pm  
874-012-7970



The Socialist Workers Party is holding online meetings during the coronavirus crisis. This is to ensure that there can still be collective local discussion, organising and actions.

Most of the meetings will be held using the Zoom system. Download the Zoom app onto your phone or computer and just before the time given for your local meeting ask to "Join a meeting".

You can then enter the number printed on this page for the appropriate meeting. **The password for all meetings is 967537.**

Make sure you look at the SWP Facebook page [facebook.com/SocialistWorkersParty](https://facebook.com/SocialistWorkersParty) for news of national online meetings and other updates.

**LONDON: NEWHAM**  
**Booklaunch: Breaking Up the British State—Scotland, Independence & Socialism**  
Wed 7 July, 7pm  
288-098-8827

**LONDON: SOUTH**  
**Climate change, racism and refugees**  
Wed 7 July, 7pm  
497-196-1801

**LONDON: SOUTH EAST**  
**Is anarchism more radical than socialism?**  
Thu 8 July, 7pm  
529-913-6390

**LONDON: TOWER HAMLETS**  
**The fight for trans rights**  
Wed 7 July, 7.30pm  
818-391-0420

**LONDON: WALTHAM FOREST**  
**Booklaunch: Breaking Up the British State—Scotland, Independence & Socialism**  
Wed 7 July, 7.30pm  
543-023-057

**LONDON: WEST AND NORTHWEST**  
**Is another education possible?**  
Thu 8 July, 7.30pm  
816-2991-5859

**MANCHESTER**  
**When Mosley was kicked out of Manchester—lessons for the fight against fascism**  
Wed 7 July, 7.15pm  
323-178-7151

**NEWCASTLE**  
**Pamphlet launch—Capitalism and the Politics of Food**  
Wed 7 July, 7pm  
368-595-2712

**NORWICH**  
**What is Zionism?**  
Wed 7 July, 7.30pm  
906-652-5299

**OXFORD & THAMES VALLEY**  
**Booklaunch: Mindshift—How Culture Transformed the Human Brain**  
Wed 7 July, 7pm  
861-2001-6477

**PORTSMOUTH**  
**Imperialism, the Middle East and Palestine**  
Wed 7 July, 7.30pm  
488-934-2809

**SHEFFIELD & SOUTH YORKSHIRE**  
**From Macron to Le Pen—France, racism and Islamophobia**  
Thu 8 July, 7pm  
528-174-9278

**SOUTHAMPTON**  
**How was Israel created?**  
Wed 7 July, 7.30pm  
381-513-5080

**SWANSEA & WEST WALES**  
**The US and China—a new imperialism?**  
Thu 8 July, 7pm  
902-964-963

**WIGAN**  
**Rebellious daughters of history**  
Thu 8 July, 7pm  
872-5136-9540

**WOLVERHAMPTON & WALSALL**  
**As the Tories rise in the polls, how do we turn the tables?**  
Wed 7 July, 7.30pm  
913-6646-7067

**YORK & SCARBOROUGH**  
**Can capitalism be sustainable?**  
Wed 7 July, 7.30pm  
827-489-7492

## BOOKMARKS the socialist bookshop



**The Labour Party—A Marxist History**  
by Tony Cliff, Donny Gluckstein and Charlie Kimber, £14.99



**Capitalism and the Politics of Food**  
by Amy Leather, £3



**Does privilege explain racism?** by Esme Choonara, Ken Olende, Yuri Prasad and Weyman Bennett, £3



**Transgender Resistance**  
by Laura Miles, £10

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# Great satire about class in this surreal comedy caper

In *How to Kidnap the Rich*, a spoilt rich kid and his poor, smart manager are stitched up and forced on the run. It's witty and engaging, says **Sadie Robinson**

**THIS BOOK** is hilarious and it grabs you from the first line. "The first kidnapping wasn't my fault. The others—those were definitely me."

In *How to Kidnap the Rich*, Ramesh Kumar tells the tale of his chaotic, surreal life. Ramesh started out as a poor kid in Old Delhi, selling tea at his abusive dad's stall. He escaped this miserable world by passing exams for less intelligent, rich people.

All goes well until he sits an exam for Rudi—and ends up coming top. As "the topper" Rudi becomes an instant celebrity, with Ramesh as his "manager".

Rudi makes heaps of money from advertising products and from starring in a TV game show. But his arrogance and wealth makes him, and by association Ramesh, targets for other rich and very powerful people.

Having been accused of being undercover Pakistani intelligence agents, sparking riots, their answer is kidnapping. "It was a simple, suicidal plan," says Ramesh. "But when a whole country is against you, what else can you do?"

Ramesh is a really likeable character and you end up rooting for him. But Rudi is also very well-drawn. At first we get the impression he's just another spoilt rich kid. But as the book progresses, we see other sides to him.

Underneath the bravado, Rudi is vulnerable and suffers from the knowledge that people are only interested in him for his fame and fortune, not for himself. I thought it was great that ultimately Rudi redeems himself.

The book makes plenty of comments on class, inequality and corruption. It's great political satire.

## Disguise

There's a hilarious section where Rudi and Ramesh are on the run in disguise, and their hostage is kidnapped by someone else.

In the process of trying to reclaim him, sari-clad Rudi nearly falls onto an electric rail track.

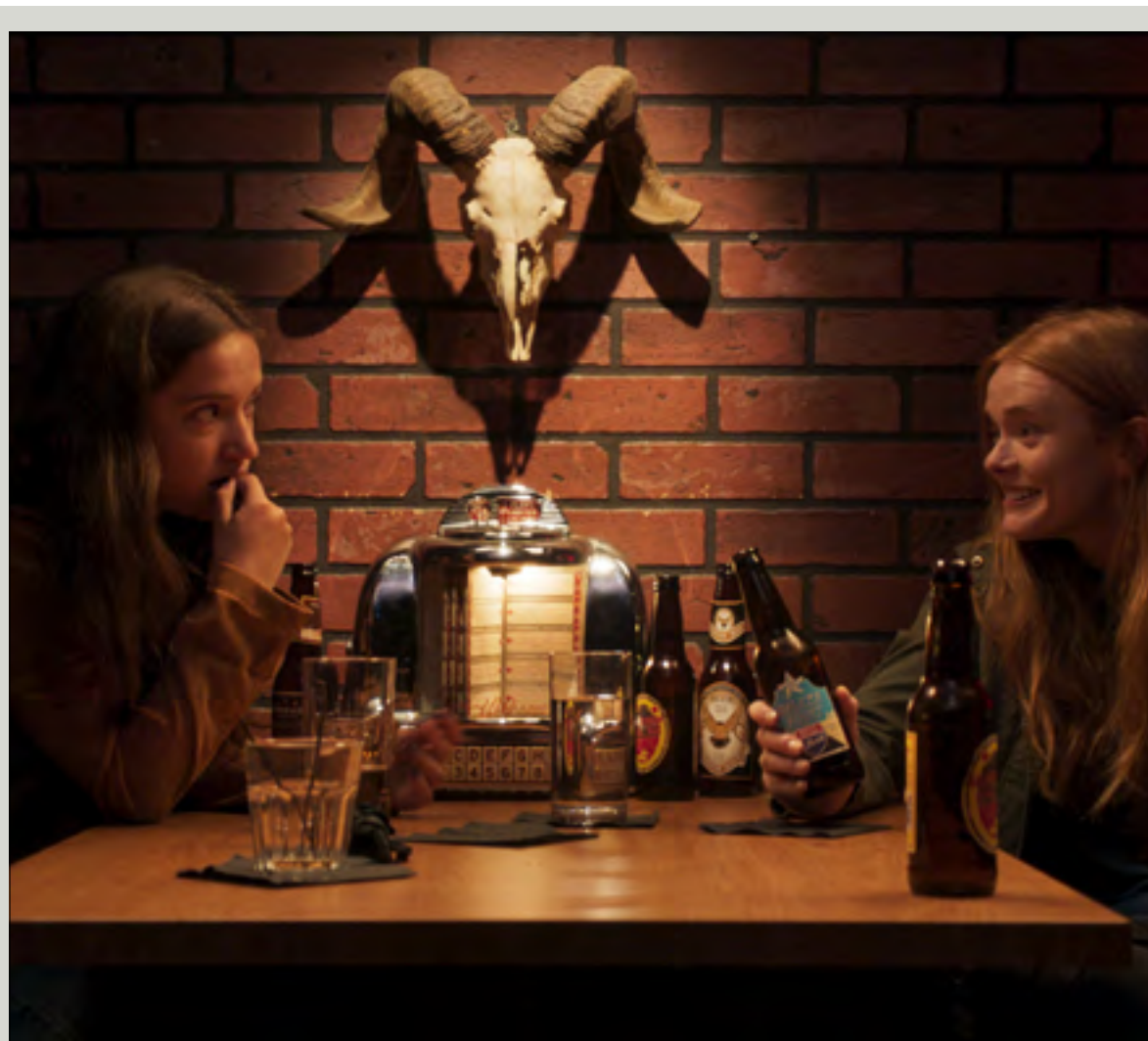
"How ignominious that would have been, how perplexing the news," reflects Ramesh. "Rudraksh Saxena's blackened body in women's clothes, and in east Delhi of all places, what a terrible ending for a multimillionaire."

The ending is a little weak—like a rushed attempt to tie up loose ends. But it's still a brilliant book.

I was reminded of *A Confederacy of Dunces*, a brilliant, laugh-out-loud tale of one man's bizarre life.

*How to Kidnap the Rich* is fast-paced, witty and surreal, and seems to always have another outlandish twist around the corner.

*How to Kidnap the Rich* by Rahul Raina, out now



CLAIRE MEETS secret witch Fiona

## Old superstitions and modern prejudices

### FILM

#### WITCH HUNT

On DVD and streaming platforms from Monday 5 July

WHAT IF witch trials happened in the 21st century, where magic was real?

That's the premise for *Witch Hunt* directed by Elle Callahan.

The film takes place in what seems to be the modern day US. But here, witches are hunted and executed for possessing magical powers.

This film centres around teenager Claire (Gideon Adlon) whose mother Martha (Elizabeth Mitchell) helps to smuggle witches across the Mexican border. In this society, children

are taught to fear witches and to see them as criminals.

But when Claire meets a teenage witch, Fiona (Abigail Cowen), she starts to see things differently—and to discover her true identity as well.

*Witch Hunt* is entertaining and beautifully shot, but suffers slightly with too much symbolism and imagery that confuses the viewers.

There is also a horror element to the film, which seems completely unnecessary.

The film is at its strongest when it focuses on the relationships between the mostly women characters, fighting back against an unjust and brutal system. There are obvious parallels made between, the

way witches are hunted and persecuted and how migrants in the US are treated.

Witch hunters that look very similar to border officers patrol the country. Their prisoners are detained in camps.

The film combines this modern take on a witch hunt with what witch hunters would do in the past, such as testing if women sank or floated in water.

And like in the past women are also burnt at the stake.

The combination of old and new horrific customs is, again, a strong aspect of the film.

*Witch Hunt* is a watchable and exciting film that would especially appeal to those who enjoy the genre.

**Sophie Squire**

### RADIO

#### EXTINCTION COMPENDIUM

Starts Thursday 1 July, 11pm, Radio 4 and then on BBC Sounds

COMEDIAN AND council Waste Education Officer Jon Long and Biologist Gillian Burke take on green issues in this fast paced new enviro-comedy.

The topic of the first episode is plastic—scourge of the planet, or synthetic scapegoat?

Expect sketches, songs, and expert interviews, tonnes of questions, and even one or two answers.

### TELEVISION

#### MURDER, MYSTERY AND MY FAMILY

Episodes available now on BBC iPlayer

CRIMINAL barristers Sasha Wass and Jeremy Dein re-examine historical murder cases that may have been miscarriages of justice to provide answers for families of the accused.

The first is a case from 1922 where a hotel pantry boy was convicted for the murder of a titled Lady.

Despite a lack of evidence, Henry Julius Jacoby made a confession to police and was charged with killing Lady Alice White.

Now, Henry Jacoby's relative Peter, whose grandmother cared for Jacoby, is seeking to question the safety of the original conviction.

Exploring questions around Jacoby's supposed confession and class prejudice, will Sasha and Jeremy find enough new evidence that Henry Jacoby's case was a miscarriage of justice?

### TOP 5 BOOKS

- 1 **Breaking Up the British State**  
Fotheringham, Sherry, Bryce (eds)
- 2 **32 Counties: the Failure of Partition and the Case for a United Ireland**  
Kieran Allen
- 3 **Transgender Resistance**  
Laura Miles
- 4 **Rebellious Daughters of History**  
Judy Cox
- 5 **A Rebel's Guide to George Orwell**  
John Newsinger

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**T**he racism that fills Israeli society has never been more obvious. Israel's new government is filled with politicians who deny Palestinians the right to even live freely in the West Bank, let alone alongside Jews as equals.

This government is the product of a decades-long process of occupation, expansion and settlement on Palestinian land.

That occupation is the central feature of all Israeli politics. It shapes and distorts every aspect of society—from its police and military to its industry, housing and education.

That's why the idea of a single Palestinian state for Jews and Arabs—one not built on ethnic division—is gaining increasing popularity as a solution.

But if Israel's racism runs so deep, how can such a solution ever be possible?

Does the hatred of Arabs among Israelis—and Palestinian resentment at years of occupation and oppression—mean coexistence is a fantasy?

Opponents of the one-state solution say that it is. They say it is impossible for Arabs and Jews to live side by side.

Often this argument is posed in a right wing way. One version says that Palestinians would massacre the Jews if they were allowed to return to the land they were expelled from in 1948, now in Israel.

Palestinians' refusal to accept their subjugation to a racist regime and the theft of their land is held up as proof that they refuse to live alongside Jews.

In reality, it is Israel that refuses to live alongside Palestinians.

**E**VERY Israeli politician, and every arm of the state, insists on keeping Palestinians marginalised and separate from Israeli Jews.

They sometimes even go as far as to discuss openly the precise percentage of the population they will allow Arabs to make up.

That is an attitude which is built into the very foundation of Israel itself, established in 1948 as an explicitly Jewish state.

Israel's founders believed their state could never exist unless Jews were a clear majority.

They waged a bloody campaign of ethnic cleansing against Palestinians to ensure that was the case.

For the same reason, every Israeli government has said that if Palestinian refugees were ever allowed to return it would threaten Israel's existence as a Jewish state.

So by its own admission,



A DEMONSTRATION for Palestine in London earlier this month

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

# IS ONE STATE POSSIBLE?

The idea of a single-state solution in Palestine is gaining traction, but some say that 'old hatreds' make this impossible. Nick Clark argues that resistance can break the hold of reactionary ideas and lead to Palestinian state

Palestinian children in front of homes bombed by Israel

Israel is a state whose very existence depends on the exclusion of Palestinians.

It also explicitly grants privileges to Israeli Jews that it denies to Palestinians—above all else their right to live in the country.

The racism that pervades Israeli society flows from this. Given all that, perhaps it's better to ask whether Israeli Jews will ever accept living alongside Palestinians.

**“The Arab Revolutions of a decade ago were a signal this is possible**

Yet strange as it may seem, this explanation as to why Israel is a racist society also points to how things can be different.

If the nature of the Israeli state is the root of Israel's racism, then that state and its racism have to be made unsustainable. The struggle for Palestinian liberation—and a single, Palestinian state—necessarily means fighting to do just that.

There's precedent for this. In

South Africa, the struggles and strikes of the black working class meant the system of apartheid—which privileged white South Africans—could no longer survive.

The revolt forced the white ruling class to make concessions to the main black opposition, the African National Congress (ANC), or face revolution.

Apartheid in Israel can also be broken.

But the struggle against it has to be different.

Unlike South Africa, Israel's racist system isn't built on the labour of its oppressed ethnic group, but on an even much bigger system of empire and war.

**ISRAEL'S founders would never have been able to settle in Palestine without the support of the British Empire, which used them to police the Arab population.**

And Israel wouldn't be the advanced, highly militarised state that it is today without the billions of dollars of aid it receives from the US.

Israel is by far the world's largest recipient of US aid. In return it gets a loyal ally committed to defending the US's interests in the Middle East.

This aid is almost entirely military funding, targeted at the tech and weapons industries central to Israel's economy and closely tied to those in the US.

These industries don't rely on Palestinian labour—there's no pressure here to accommodate or compromise with the Palestinians.

If anything, the militarisation of Israel's society fuels its drive to conquer them.

Instead, the struggle has to shatter the link between Israel and the US that supports the apartheid system and makes coexistence completely impossible.

It means a fight against the whole system of US power in the Middle East—and a revolt that spreads far beyond Palestine's borders.

That might sound abstract. But the Arab Revolutions of a decade ago were a brief but glimmering signal that this is actually possible.

They shook, and even removed, some of the Arab regimes that cooperate with the US and are complicit with Israel.

Solidarity with Palestinians—and a recognition that their struggles were linked—was a feature of them all.

An even bigger revolt could have the power to concretely fight for Palestinian liberation.

It could also make it impossible for the US to keep its grip on the Middle East.

And if the US can no longer hold onto the Middle East, then it can also no longer support Israel's apartheid regime.

The racist state would fall into crisis, no longer able to sustain the laws and structures



that privilege Israeli Jews over Arabs.

In such a crisis Israeli Jews, just like white South Africans, could choose coexistence instead.

Which leads to a final point. The battle to win a single, secular state in Palestine, with equal democratic rights for all its people, would take a huge revolt by ordinary people to transform society.

And when society changes, the way that people think can also begin to change with it.

So it would remove the basis for anti-Palestinian racism among Israeli Jews. But it would also challenge and remove the reactionary rulers in the Middle East who sometimes promote antisemitism for their own ends.

For so long rulers in the Middle East have used its ethnic and religious diversity to divide people.

Fighting to end those regimes almost naturally means uniting against their divide and rule tactics too.

**ONE OF the most important features of the Egyptian Revolution was the way Muslims and Coptic Christians united in the fight against the regime of dictator Hosni Mubarak.**

Even when the regime encouraged and organised Islamist attacks on Copts, ordinary people—Muslim, Christian and atheist—fought together to defend them.

Many of the most brutally repressive regimes—often close allies of the US—promote the worst antisemitism.

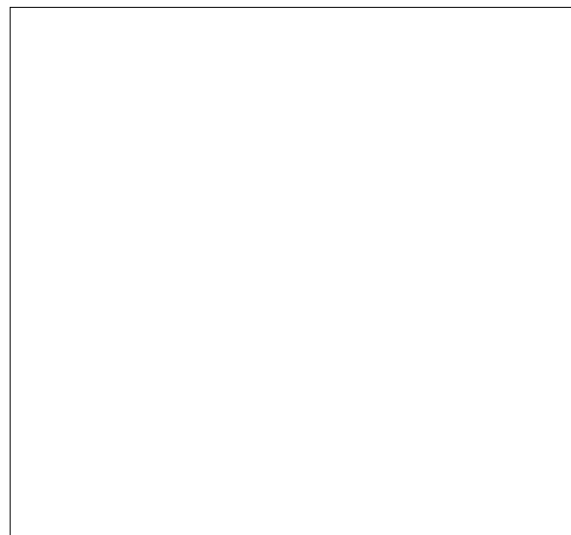
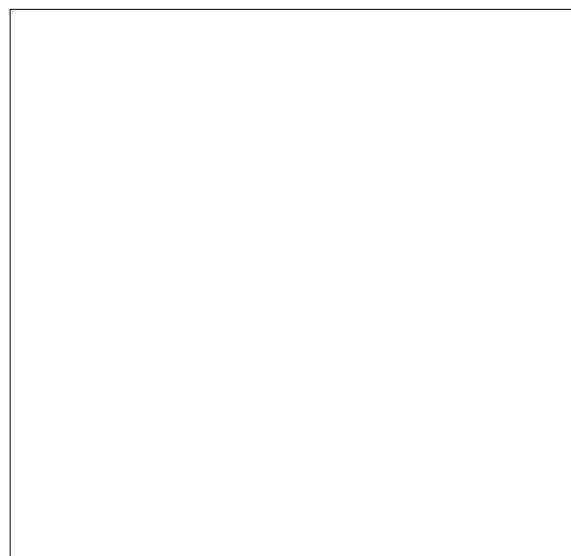
They use it to posture as opponents of Israel and friends of the Palestinians.

All the while, they try to turn the anger away from the cause of Palestinian oppression—the system of US control of the Middle East—and onto Jewish people themselves.

This antisemitism isn't some deep-seated, longstanding hatred that is held among ordinary Muslims and Arabs.

Antisemitism began in Europe. It was used by Western and Eastern European governments to make Jews scapegoats. But for hundreds of years, Jews, Muslims and Christians lived alongside each other in the Middle East.

Take the city of Hebron which is one of the oldest



**A Palestinian man burns an Israeli flag (top) An Israeli soldier patrols Hebron (above)**

Arab and Jewish settlements in Palestine. As the supposed burial place of the prophet Abraham, it's a hugely significant site for Muslims, Christians and Jews.

Today it's filled with soldiers who police and control the Palestinian population on behalf of Israeli settlers hoping to "reclaim" the city.

But for over 800 years Jews and Muslims coexisted in Hebron. The violence and hatred is much more recent—and began with the drive to force Arabs out to make way for Israel.

Looking at this not-so-distant past is a reminder not only that Jews and Arabs have lived together before—but that they can do so again.

For that to happen, Israel's apartheid regime has to be got rid of. But to think anything else means accepting a society that will always be divided by race.

And that's not a recipe for freedom for anyone in Palestine.



## How capitalism tries to profit from our bodies

The new series of Love Island is launching. **Sophie Squire** investigates why certain body types are marketed to us, and the pressure to buy into them

LOVE ISLAND returned to our screens on Monday with a new host of singles.

Yet for some viewers, the latest lineup of contestants was lacking something. Not just in terms of race, but also body size.

It's not wrong for people to want to see themselves represented.

That's especially true when the right constantly attacks calls for diversity by claiming it's "woke".

The bosses are only interested in pushing diversity—whether that be board directors or television participants—because it can turn them a profit.

We have the farce of M&S launching a "more inclusive" range of lingerie. It claims this is partly inspired by the "global conversation" following the death of George Floyd

Love Island's contestants are also picked for their ability to make money.

They become "aspirational" figures that the viewers are encouraged to emulate, from what they wear to what they look like.

### Sponsored

It's no coincidence that the Love Island villa includes a well-stocked gym and is being sponsored by sportswear shop JD Sports this year.

The message is if you pay for a gym membership and buy new sports gear you too can look like the contestants on the show.

Social media and the entertainment industry constantly feed us with examples of their perceived physical perfection.

They then partner with corporate sponsors and advertise products that they say could make us look this way.

This creates new beauty and body "trends",

which we feel crushing pressure to follow.

One surgery that has seen a surge in popularity is the Brazilian Butt Lift.

This cosmetic procedure has the highest mortality rate of any plastic surgery at 1 in 3,000.

Yet thousands are still flocking to get this surgery.

Why then do we watch Love Island, and put ourselves at risk, if it causes so much harm?

The pressure to have the perfect body doesn't just come from Instagram influencers or TV shows.

It comes from the system we live in.

In a system run for profit every aspect of our lives is seen as a commodity that can be bought and sold, even our bodies.

When our bodies are sold back to us for the benefit of the bosses, we disconnect from our own realities and no longer recognise these things as our own.

We become alienated from ourselves, our lives

**“We become alienated from ourselves, our lives and those around us**

and those around us.

This makes it easier to believe we have to look the way society is telling us to.

And often we want to disconnect from our realities or struggles by watching programmes like Love Island.

But there are also contradictory pressures on us. We're bombarded with adverts that pull us in the opposite direction—fast food adverts for example.

While being told to buy the latest diet plans, we're also sent offers on the latest things to consume.

We're then blamed for buckling to the pressure of these adverts.

### Position

Ideas flowing from the top about women's position in society mean our bodies are sexualised and scrutinised.

Women are taught from a very young age that we must meet the beauty standards of the time.

Of course it's not just women who feel this way, as men are also under some pressure to have a "perfect body".

Calls for more diversity on shows like Love Island is a push back against profitable beauty standards.

But more body diversity in the media will not completely solve the alienation we have from our own bodies.

Only when people are not living in a society that sees us as a way of making profit will we be truly liberated from capitalism's pressures.

### READ MORE

● **The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine**  
by Ilan Pappé  
£12.99

● **Palestine: Resistance, Revolution and the Struggle for Freedom**  
by Anne Alexander and others  
£2

● **Antisemitism: The Far Right, Zionism And The Left**  
by Rob Ferguson  
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# Drivers strike and protest for pay and safety

by SOPHIE SQUIRE

DRIVERS FOR rideshare app Bolt are sick of low pay and a dangerous work environment. Over 100 of them struck and rallied outside the company's headquarters in west London on Tuesday of last week.

The members of the ADCU union have three demands. They want pay of at least £2 per mile, worker status and an end to unfair dismissals.

The strike went ahead despite bosses offering an £80 bribe to try and make drivers work.

Drivers blocked the road before marching to Bolt headquarters.

## Issue

Safety is a major issue for drivers. Anna told Socialist Worker that she hasn't driven for Bolt since her colleague Gabriel Bringye was killed while driving for the app in May.

"Bolt never told us what they planned to do to protect us after Gabriel was killed. They never even sent us an email," she said.

"As a woman, I can't take the risk. If I get attacked I feel Bolt won't care."



TAKING THE message to bosses at Bolt headquarters last week

PICTURE: ADCU

Anna also said that some Bolt drivers believe they can't report incidents or say no to trips because they fear being barred from the app.

"You have to accept every job that they give you, even

if you feel unsafe. If you complain or don't want to accept jobs you can be 'deactivated' for sometimes weeks," she said.

Ramand, who has worked for Bolt for two years, said,

"To Bolt, the driver is always the one at fault for any incident, it's never the customer.

"If you try and call the service line to make a report you get put on hold for hours. You just stop

trying." He added that the company "refuses to pay for any damage that is done to our cars by customers, and just tell us to make a claim through our insurance."

Driver Alex explained to Socialist Worker why ADCU members are pushing for £2 a mile.

"So many trips that I do simply aren't worth it. If you add on fuel and the congestion charge, I'm making just over £1 per mile sometimes. And that's before Bolt takes its cut."

## Regulated

Catalin also added that the pay for rideshare apps should be regulated like it is for black cabs.

"Bolt is still regulated by Transport for London (TfL). So why isn't my pay?" she asked.

"We work day and night for exactly the same price—that's not the case for black cab drivers."

And Catalin added Bolt doesn't even provide the basics for its drivers.

"The company hasn't even got somewhere we can go to the toilet."

"I have to piss outside my car when I'm on the job." Driver Abdi added, "At the moment we are considered to be self-employed."

"This means we don't get basic workers' rights such as holiday pay."

ADCU president Yaseen Aslam told Socialist Worker, "I began work for rideshare apps years ago."

"The pay per mile was £1.50 and since then drivers have actually seen a decrease in their wages."

## Legal

The ADCU plans legal action against Bolt following the victory in getting Uber to recognise their 70,000 drivers as workers.

Everyone will hope the legal action wins.

But the battle outside of court is even more vital. The protest and strike on Tuesday showed that workers are ready to fight.

More action can force Bolt and other rideshare apps to concede to all the workers' demands.

Some workers' names have been changed. Send solidarity to @ADCUnion on Twitter

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# Back Sharon Graham in Unite vote, say workers

Unite members speak to Isabel Ringrose on why backing Sharon Graham for Unite general secretary is linked to the fight for workplace organising

**SHARON** Graham is running for general secretary for the Unite union based on a campaign calling for a return to the workplace.

She has large support in the union's rank and file workforce—the most important section of the union.

Unite members across Britain spoke to Socialist Worker about why they're backing Graham for general secretary.

Joe Pisani is from Unite's Greater Glasgow Electrical Plumbing and Mechanical branch, who nominated Graham to put her on the final ballot. He said, "We believe in Graham's vision for this union."

"Graham is my candidate for general secretary because she will reinvigorate it to where it should be. She will make it more focused and driven to organise in the workplace."

"If you don't have active branches and workplaces, the union will eventually die out. An organised workplace makes a strong union."

Joe added, "The deskilling agenda has been a major dispute for us."

"Graham has helped with organising and strategy to fight against that agenda."

Kathy Taylor is branch secretary of the Unite health sector branch in Bristol. "In her manifesto, Graham says she is for action above rhetoric," Kathy explained.

"I'm sick of people giving us a whole spiel about doing things differently, but things stay the same. And it would be fantastic to have a woman in charge."

"Coming out of the pandemic, people want change. It's not the same old that is going to give us it. Graham's not fazed by anything. It shows

strong character—we need that, not flip-flopping about. Graham will keep fighting for the rank and file."

## Picked

Chrissie Gardner, who is assistant secretary of the same branch, agreed. "Graham is not rank and file, but she is the best pitched and placed person to create space for the rank and file," she said.

"I thought she had an inspiring industrial manifesto. She's been very good at tackling big bosses."

John Cooper, the Unite convenor of Vauxhall Motors branch in Ellesmere Port, said, "Our branch and shop stewards' committee is in full support of Graham. She's the only candidate that talks about genuine fightback. The others are a boys' club."

"I'm happy to support anyone who brings lay members into all aspects of our trade union," John added.

"It takes us back to the workplace where trade unions were born. Trade unions begin in the workplace, not in parliament."

"It's about workers pushing back against unscrupulous bosses. That's why if we get our industrial strategy right, which we will, the correct politics follow—left politics."

Frank Morris is from the Unite construction rank and file executive, whose committee has come out in support of Graham.

"We've just led a rank and file campaign once again halting deskilling in construction—Sharon Graham's the candidate who opens doors to that kind of organising," he said.

"If you want elected reps and workplace representation from the shop floor, vote for Sharon Graham—simple as that."

For details of Sharon Graham's campaign go to [sharongraham.org](http://sharongraham.org)

## Graham is the change needed

**SOME** Unite members believe Sharon Graham is the change the union needs.

Chrissie's regional committee has a shocking lack of representation. "There were a handful of women and around two black people. I feel that speaks volumes," she said.

"I think it does matter that Graham is a woman. And her equality strategy is really good."

Kathy added, "I want Unite to grow with women. We make up the majority of low paid and part-time workers."

Joe is concerned about the difficulties rank and file candidates face to run for general secretary.

"I don't believe it's right that union employees should decide lay members' organising structures," he said.

He explained that paid officials have voted over things such as collective bargaining.

"This is a path and mentality being bred by the Turners and Becketts," Joe said.

"Both are eager to take agency away from lay members."

"Even though she's a full time employee, Graham's taking it back to the workplace."

## Don't drop the political fight

**ALTHOUGH** Sharon Graham is committed to supporting shop stewards and union reps, there has been less focus on political campaigns.

Graham needs to focus on political issues such as anti-racism, climate change and Palestine.

And opposing Labour leader Keir Starmer's politics can't be ignored.

It's vital unions take up questions of oppression—as well as exploitation—because they're used to divide workers.

Changes are won when the working class unites and takes wider battles into the workplace.

It's good that Graham is campaigning for equality in the workplace.

But it must extended to the wider issues that affect workers' everyday lives.

## 'Why should we now be settling for the second best?'

**OTHER** candidates in the election race are Labour right-winger Gerard Coyne and assistant general secretary Steve Turner.

Howard Beckett stepped out of the race saying this would allow Turner the best chance to win.

Calls are now being made for Graham to also step down to set up Turner as a "left unity candidate".

But John Cooper says Turner is only running as "he believes it's his turn". And John doesn't think Beckett's supporters will

now all assist Turner.

"Two weeks ago Turner and his supporters were vilifying Beckett, now they're on the same platform," John explained.

Pictures of Graham have also been created with her face superimposed on hated former-Tory prime minister Margaret Thatcher.

John called this "disgraceful".

"They're doing it because they've taken a misogynistic stance."

"They can't attack Graham's politics, so they

make personal attacks."

Joe thinks "people will get more of the same" with Turner. That can create space for Coyne to exploit.

"Beckett decided to capitulate because he didn't get as many nominations as Turner did," he said. "But it didn't surprise me."

"Previously, general secretary elections turnouts weren't high for the size of the union," Joe added. "People are disenfranchised."

"Graham has vision, and

is clear what she wants to do to reinvigorate the union."

Chrissie says she won't support "blokes within the hierarchy of Unite."

"I have no confidence in them," she says.

"Coyne is very dangerous. He's pretty poor on immigration and has no vision at all."

"Turner is all 'let's talk this through' with bosses."

Kathy added, "Turner should step down and push Graham forward if the fear is two candidates will split everything."

"She's more creative than some career politicians like Coyne."

And she comes across as way more inclusive.

"We're not going to settle for second best."

## IN BRIEF

**Don't let coffee strikes go cold**

STRIKES AND protests at the Jacobs Douwe Egberts coffee factory in Banbury, Oxfordshire, have been suspended as two weeks of talks began on Monday.

Unite union members have been involved in strikes since the beginning of May over fire and rehire plans for 291 employees. These plans have now been pushed back until 13 September.

The workers have run a strong strike, with lots of support and momentum that means they can win. Keeping strikes going during the talks can keep up that momentum—and keep the pressure on management.

**Wheelchair makers accept pay deal**

UNITE UNION members at electric wheelchair maker Sunrise Medical in Dudley have accepted an improved pay offer and ended strikes.

**Towage workers could go toe to toe**

TOWAGE WORKERS at the Sullom Voe Terminal in Scotland could strike after talks with bosses broke down.

The 40 Unite union members are already set to start a seven-week overtime ban from Monday of next week.

**Wardens enforce action in Ealing**

OUTSOURCED traffic wardens in Ealing, west London, were set to strike for two weeks from Wednesday of this week.

Bosses at outsourcer Serco want workers to accept severance packages.

**Break in breakfast cereal strike**

STRIKES AT Weetabix factories in Northamptonshire have been suspended for talks. The Unite members were fighting against a fire and rehire attack.

But Weetabix bosses have now agreed to not make any of these changes until at least 1 September.

**Wheel take action against cuts**

OVER 200 workers at wheel manufacturer GKN Sankey in Telford are set to strike over cuts on Mondays 5, 12 and 19 July.

**End the cycle of pay freezes in Enfield**

CYCLE SAFETY instructors in Enfield, north London protested on Tuesday of this week over a 12-year pay freeze.

The IWGB union members are also angry at their employer, Enfield council, for frequently cancelling their workdays with little notice.

## COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES



STRIKERS STOOD firm Forth Valley College in Falkirk, Scotland

PICTURE: EIS FORTH VALLEY COLLEGE

# Victory over fire and rehire-type attacks

by CHARLIE KIMBER

WORKERS AT Forth Valley College (FVC) in Falkirk, Alloa and Stirling are celebrating a victory for strikes and campaigning.

Anne-Marie Harley, the EIS-Fela union branch convenor, told Socialist Worker, “It’s a complete victory, total capitulation by management.”

FVC was a test bed for college bosses’ nationwide attacks.

In February 2020 the college told workers they were shifting some lecturer posts to become “instructor assessors”. The choice for existing staff was to take voluntary severance or to sign on to the new contracts.

It was such a threat to jobs and conditions everywhere that it led to a national dispute. This saw a series of national strikes and then a victory last month.

Now the settlement has been fully applied at FVC itself.

Anne-Marie said, “There were 27 lecturers who were forced onto an inferior contract

by a process similar to fire and rehire. They have all been reinstated to their lecturer contract with compensation for what they have lost.

“They would have been expected to work through the summer on the new contract. Now they will be on holiday.

“In addition, all the staff newly employed at the college on the inferior contract will be offered lecturer posts immediately.

“They will have access to the training and qualifications they need.

The victory follows sustained action and support from the students.

**Inspiration**

It should be an inspiration to everyone fighting fire and rehire. Victory is possible—without making concessions.

Anne-Marie said, “It was the right thing to do. We were determined to fight for our members.

“The most important element was the enormous perseverance of the workers at FVC. They kept going through 11 strike days, losing money

and suffering real stress. “And there was important political pressure, particularly from the Greens.

“It was an embarrassment for the Scottish government to be denouncing fire and rehire in general but doing nothing about a similar process on its own doorstep.”

EIS member Donny Gluckstein told Socialist Worker, “It’s fire and rehire reversed after 15 months.

“The EIS had a choice to allow each college to fight on its own, or follow the motto of ‘an injury to one is an injury to all’. We decided national strikes were essential.

“Significantly, the first breakthrough came on 4 May, two days before the Holyrood election when, under political pressure, the employers settled in general terms. That only came after escalating strikes.

“Throughout the dispute the leadership was in the hands of lay reps at branch and national level.”

The FVC example, and the lessons of the national dispute, need to be widely publicised. Action gets results.

## UCU UNION

## Rally to build fights over jobs and wages

MEMBERS OF the UCU union are organising to unite the struggle for better pay and conditions across all of further and higher education.

The UCU solidarity movement was set to hold an online rally on Thursday of this week to deepen the fightback.

The rally was set to include speakers from Liverpool and Leicester universities who are staging a marking boycott.

There were also set to be speakers from the Defend the Arts campaign and the UCU prison education group.

UCU union leaders argue that their members don’t want to take action for their pay and pensions. But the workers balloting over pay at 11 colleges across Britain show that this isn’t the case.

And members showed they want more action when they passed several motions at UCU congress

committing the union to fight over pay and workload.

There are also signs that UCU members are willing to strike against job cuts.

Pushing for strikes on a national scale is vital in the fight against the continued marketisation of university, attacks on pay and widespread redundancies.

●Join the UCU solidarity meeting on Thursday 1 July at 6:30 pm. Register at [bit.ly/2SGEiGA](https://bit.ly/2SGEiGA)

## SCHOOLS

## Strike against victimisation

STRIKERS AT Oaks Park High School in Redbridge, east London, protested against their Labour-run council for backing their bosses in a fight against victimisation.

The members of the NEU union are striking against victimisations. School bosses sacked NEU rep Keiran Mahon after he encouraged workers to use Section 44 of the Employment Rights Act to protect their safety.

Workers used section 44 to oppose the unsafe return to schools during the second Covid-19 wave in January.

Strikers protested outside Redbridge Town Hall last Wednesday. Keiran Mahon, a victimised NEU co-rep, told Socialist Worker, “I was democratically elected in December 2020. By 7 May I had lost my job.

“Redbridge was one of the most infected areas in the country and the school has 2,000 students.

“During that time my partner was in her third trimester of pregnancy. If I entered that building for any second longer than I needed to, I would put both my unborn child and partner in danger.

“Another member who was pregnant asked to work from home but was told it was safe to come in.”



Outside Redbridge town hall

Secretary of Redbridge NEU, Venda Premkumar told Socialist Worker, “The most vocal people get picked off to send a message to all staff, ‘keep your head down’.

“They want a compliant workforce, they don’t like staff practising professional autonomy or raising concerns.

“Staff are working in fear, watching their backs, scared that an error will be picked on and result in getting sacked. This must affect the students.

“There’s a culture problem within the school. NEU members are determined and resolute that they’re doing the right thing.”

Workers were set to strike again on Tuesday and Wednesday of this week.

●Messages of support to [venda.premkumar@neu.org.uk](mailto:venda.premkumar@neu.org.uk)  
Donate to Keiran’s solidarity fund at [bit.ly/KeiranMahon](https://bit.ly/KeiranMahon)

## ROUND-UP

●PIMLICO Academy teachers in London struck for three days last week and were set to strike again on Thursday of this week.

They are fighting an unsafe working environment and failure to communicate serious incidents properly with staff.

The strike has gained solid support. Local councillors and parents are opposed to management not allowing parents to have a voice.

Following failed negotiations staff will walk out again on Thursday 1 July. ●Messages of solidarity to [ruth.gibson@neu.org.uk](mailto:ruth.gibson@neu.org.uk)

●STRIKES AT two secondary schools in Derby—Lees Brook Community School and Merrill Academy—were set to begin from Thursday of this week.

The Archway Trust, which runs the schools, wants to slash jobs and deskill the workforce. Workers also

fear that cuts will lead to increased class sizes.

Workers are also set to walk out on Tuesday 13 and Wednesday 14 July.

●Messages of solidarity to [Kieran.picken@neu.org.uk](mailto:Kieran.picken@neu.org.uk)

●SOME 150 workers from Bablake and King Henry VIII Schools in Coventry were set to strike on Wednesday and Thursday of this week.

They are fighting a merger of the two private schools planned for September.

NEU union members say the merger could mean job cuts.

●Messages of solidarity to [Christopher.denson@neu.org.uk](mailto:Christopher.denson@neu.org.uk)

●WORKERS AT Valence Primary School in Dagenham, east London were set to strike on Wednesday of this week against a restructure that threatens half of the workers with reduced salaries.

## OFSTED

SCHOOLS INSPECTOR Ofsted’s top brass Amanda Spielman has claimed that protests and activism in schools are damaging to education.

It comes after students at Pimlico Academy in central London revolted over racist policies implemented by their headteacher.

Students at some schools

have also been stopped from showing solidarity with Palestine.

In 2018, Spielman backed a headteacher in Newham, east London, who banned the hijab.

The real threat to education comes from decades of Tory austerity—and attacks on education enforced by Ofsted.



## CONSTRUCTION

# Victory for action at Amazon Gateshead

by ISABEL RINGROSE

**WORKERS AT** the construction site of a new Amazon Warehouse in Gateshead, near Newcastle, last Friday won their fight against contractors who sacked them.

Some 60 electricians had walked out after workers without adequate training were employed to do some of their work by another contractor on the site, SSE Enterprise Contracting.

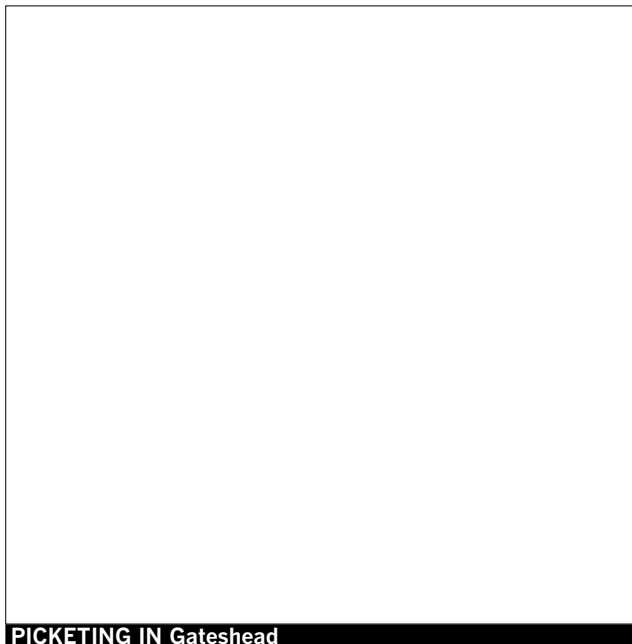
SSE Enterprise Contracting denied the accusation, saying all of its workers are suitably skilled.

## Protest

A day of protest followed by the Unite union members.

Another contractor, SIS Systems, responded by sacking around 40 electricians for taking part in the demonstration. Workers then held further protests.

Joe Pisani is from Unite's Greater Glasgow Electrical Plumbing and Mechanical branch. He told Socialist Worker, "This win is going to embolden so many workplaces to go and do something."



PICKETING IN Gateshead

"Unskilled labourers do not have electrical qualifications, but the main contractor told them to connect up sockets and fire alarm systems. It's a way to get extremely cheap labour."

Joe explained, "Some 60 guys walked off the jobs, picketing and blocking roads. They got a threatening email

to get their tools and it basically said, 'you're sacked'.

"They were told to leave. This set them off more.

Joe added, "Agency workers don't usually get involved, but they did here.

"Since they got sacked, last Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday they picketed and struck outside." "They

won in less than a week," he said.

Joe said that using ballots for "official things" such as pay fights is important, but this rank and file action meant workers fought back "there and then."

"They went for it and attacked the bosses where it hurt," Joe said.

"Going through those proper processes would've taken a minimum six weeks after getting a ballot going.

"Action is always a winner, and much, much quicker."

The action forced Amazon to demand the contractors retreat.

It was forced to make the main contractor sit with Unite regional officers and members of the rank and file.

"They've now come out to say sorry and are now re-employing and hiring more electricians to do the jobs," Joe explained.

Joe said this win "shows that giving workers a bit of organising power, helping members with what they want to do, can make a campaign go".

"Workers will make it work—that's how a union should be run," he added.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

## New fight in east London

**WORKERS AT** Tower Hamlets council in east London have relaunched a battle over fire and rehire that saw large and angry strikes last year. Members of the Unison union are balloting for more strikes. Workers struck last year when the Labour-run council demanded they accept new contracts that ran roughshod over hard-won terms and conditions.

Now Unison has demanded improvements to the contracts. But after council bosses rejected this as "unviable", some 71 percent of workers rejected their proposals to end the dispute.

Their Unison branch said, "Our action last year won huge support. We can galvanise even greater support as people challenge why essential workers are seeing cuts to terms and conditions and jobs."

The ballot is set to end on Thursday 22 July.

## ROUND UP

**USDAW UNION** members in Derbyshire are striking over the effects of a depot closure.

Workers at the Long Eaton Marks & Spencer distribution centre operated by DHL at Long Eaton have a third 24-hour stoppage planned for this Thursday.

The battle is over how much redundancy pay the workers will receive.

They have already held two strikes.

■ **ENGINEERS EMPLOYED** by Brush Electrical Machines, in Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire, are striking against bosses' fire and rehire plans.

The 30 Unite union members began strikes on 25 May and are set to continue until 16 August.

Fire and rehire plans will result in a pay cut of between £10,000 and £15,000 a year

■ **SCOTRAIL** train conductors and ticket examiners are continuing their Sunday strikes with solid support.

The union is demanding that the Scottish government intervenes.

## HEALTH WORKERS

## Prepare for NHS pay battle

**HEALTH WORKERS** in England and Wales need to be ready to respond quickly to a new pay offer that could emerge in the next few days.

There are rumours that the NHS Pay Review body will recommend an offer as low as 2.1 percent.

Although it's double the 1 percent "pay rise" that Boris Johnson's government wanted for health workers, it would still be considerably below inflation, with the RPI rate currently at 3.3 percent.

But there is a danger that the leaders of Unison, the biggest health service trade union, could try to bounce members into accepting an offer far below its target of a £2,000 increase for all NHS employees.

That's why activists need to prepare now.

"We need to be ready to bombard our unions with demands for a strike ballot if the government offers us less than our demands," said Jordan Rivera, a member of Unison's health executive who spoke to Socialist Worker in a personal capacity.

"We've had the worst

year of our working lives. Many of us are exhausted and traumatised. Our wards are desperately short-staffed and demand remains overwhelming.

Winning what's needed means stepping up workplace agitation over pay with meetings, posterings, leafleting, workplace selfies and more. But it also means readying union members for the battle to come, with petitions addressed to the health service unions to demand action.

There is huge support for action over NHS pay, both in and outside the health service.

Matthew Tovey, a nurse at the Cwm Taf Morgannwg University hospital in South Wales earlier this spring started an online petition demanding a 15 percent pay rise.

So far, around 750,000 people have signed it.

If our unions were to capitalise on that feeling with strikes, the Tories could be brought to their knees.

● Sign the NHS pay petition at [bit.ly/NHSpayfight](https://bit.ly/NHSpayfight)  
**Yuri Prasad**

## TRANSPORT

## Nine Woolwich Ferry strikes

**WOOLWICH** Ferry workers in east London are escalating action in support of two victimised union representatives.

Workers, in the Unite union, have walked out for eight days since 14 May. This was in support of a single victimised rep.

They have now set nine strike days in July.

The escalation is in response to a second union rep being issued a written warning from the new Transport for London (TfL) management.

Workers also oppose the failure to agree to a new pay and reward scheme.

They claim there's overuse of agency staff and a failure to provide adequate health and safety training to new

employees. All the ferry workers take health and safety very seriously.

Strikers often look back to the death of a young worker in 2011.

The ferry has suffered from poor employment relations which led to TfL taking over its operation from Briggs Marine Contractors Ltd in January.

Despite the takeover, employee relations remain incredibly low.

Unite has since called on the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan to intervene to resolve this dispute.

● Messages of support to [onay.kasab@uniteheunion.org](mailto:onay.kasab@uniteheunion.org) Donate to the strike fund, Cheques to Unite 1/2050 Greenwich Branch, Account No 20267438, Sort Code 60-83-01

## CIVIL SERVICE WORKERS

## DVLA strikes hit hard

**WORKERS' ACTION** at the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) has caused a backlog of work for bosses to sort out.

Members of the PCS union are striking over unsafe working conditions. Some 600 workers at the DVLA offices in Swansea have caught coronavirus since the pandemic began.

In their latest strikes workers are taking targeted action to maximise disruption.

Workers who open and scan post—including tax and application forms—struck between Tuesday and Thursday of last week.

It means DVLA managers now have to face up to a backlog of 1.4 million items of post, according to the PCS. Those workers were set to strike again on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of this week. Contact centre workers—who have been made to come into work in crowded conditions—were

also set to strike on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday.

One striker, Daniel, said, "We are the only civil servants in the office in the numbers we are.

"I can't stand by and watch as the agency sleepwalks into disaster."

The battle at the DVLA comes as the Department for Work and Pensions, is forcing jobcentre workers back into the office.

The strike has won a media profile and Labour MPs challenged transport secretary Grant Shapps over it in parliament.

Organising for strikers to speak at union branch meetings, and a national demonstration, could help turn support into solidarity.

● Donate to the strike fund. Account Name: Fighting Fund Levy. A/C 20331490. Sort Code: 60-83-01 Reference: DVLA. Send messages of support to [responseteam@pcs.org.uk](mailto:responseteam@pcs.org.uk)

## FROM PAGE 20

>>>from back page shameful it was that the far right mobilised outside Jo Cox House, a local children's charity built in her honour.

Ziyaad, a student in Batley told Socialist Worker, "This is my first protest in Batley, this unity is great, it was a beautiful march.

"Racists in the election will be outnumbered by us. It's great that we have outnumbered them massively today."

The protest created a

reaction around the town with people applauding and filming from their windows.

Local shop worker Al told Socialist Worker, "I haven't seen anything like this before.

"It's great to see how many people take racism seriously. "Racism is something I've suffered in Batley so it's great to see that there are people willing to take a stand against that."





# Let down by the Labour Party

A loss in the Batley and Spen by-election would be a clear sign that Keir Starmer's leadership of the party has been a failure writes **Charlie Kimber**

**THE BATLEY and Spen by-election was set to deliver a shock this week. But it wasn't clear what the shock would be.**

The Labour Party is in disarray under Keir Starmer's leadership. It would be a surprise if it holds on to the seat it won with a 3,525 majority in just 2019.

Socialist Worker went to press before the by-election. The Tories hoped to repeat how they won in Hartlepool in April and persuade enough voters they are on their side.

Their candidate Ryan Stephenson has been campaigning on "More police, more jobs, more investment". It's a blatant pitch that constituencies with Tory MPs are favoured by the government.

Perhaps the furore around former health secretary Matt Hancock could remind enough people of the Tories' appalling record and shift some votes.

Acceptance of Labour's decline is so commonplace that it's possible to underplay how extraordinary a Tory win would be. Labour has held the seat in West Yorkshire for 24 years.

The former MP Jo Cox was murdered by a fascist and her sister is standing as Labour's candidate now. It ought to be an easy win.

## Damning

A loss would be utterly damning of Keir Starmer's uselessness and the wider crisis that Labour is facing.

One opinion poll in Batley and Spen last week showed the Tories on 47 percent, Labour on 41 percent and former MP George Galloway on six percent.

But Galloway's support was expected to have risen since then.

Batley resident Rayan told Socialist Worker, "I meet a lot of people who are going to vote Galloway. He is very clear about Palestine and



**A PROTEST** against Tommy Robinson in Batley last Saturday PICTURE: CALDERDALE STAND UP TO RACISM

issues of Islamophobia.

"Lots of Muslims I talk to are not happy with Keir Starmer.

"They also do not like it that the Labour candidate was quickly chosen and two councillors, who have been around for a long time in

Labour, were pushed aside." Labour candidate Kim Leadbeater was forced to acknowledge Galloway's threat.

She said he had "focused very heavily on the horrific situation in Palestine—and let's be clear, it is a horrific

situation". Starmer took a different line. After Leadbeater was shouted at while campaigning he tweeted, "George Galloway's poisonous politics have no place in our country. "The abuse Kim Leadbeater has faced is disgraceful."

However, there was

no evidence offered that Galloway was linked to what happened.

Zahida lives in the Mount Pleasant area of Batley. She told Socialist Worker, "I think a lot of issues are coming together. I don't have trust in any of the politicians.

"They have all failed us. Perhaps a change might make a difference. We have been let down as Muslims but many other people have been let down too."

There is a huge gulf left by Labour's shift to the right and its lack of opposition to the Tories. Galloway may have tapped some of that. But he isn't the answer.

His anti-imperialism is mixed with a conscious pitch to what he calls "socially and culturally conservative politics".

He has called for parental control of what children are taught in schools. That's seeking support from those who don't want LGBT+ issues to be part of education.

## Angry

It also chimes with those people who were rightly angry when a teacher at Batley Grammar School showed an Islamophobic cartoon of the Prophet Muhammad in a religious studies class.

Galloway says that during the last 40 years Labour has become the party of identity politics and the "ethnic minority".

Any success he has will boost the idea that Labour has to become more "anti-woke". And that's a recipe for conceding further to the Tories on issues such as racism.

Alan, a Batley resident, says, "I will probably still vote Labour. I don't want to see smiling Tories.

"But what I do know is that after 1 July we will promptly be forgotten by the media and pretty much all the politicians too."

## Hundreds oppose the far right in Batley

**ANTI-RACISTS** IN Batley, West Yorkshire, took to the streets to oppose the far right on Saturday.

They outnumbered a small mobilisation in support of Nazi candidates standing in the Batley and Spen by-election.

Nazi Tommy Robinson who was expected to turn up was nowhere to be seen.

The handful of fascists were met by 250 anti-fascists from Stand Up To Racism, Muslim groups and trade unions.

As they marched, the protesters chanted, "From the Pennines to the sea, Yorkshire will be fascist free."

The march travelled down Batley High Street before returning to the town hall where they held a minute's silence for murdered MP Jo Cox.

School students Joseph and Jacob told Socialist Worker, "Tommy Robinson and his supporters are fascists. He was embarrassed in the North West election in 2019.

"The same will happen to his co-thinkers in Batley.

"We're here to spread awareness and show the importance of opposing Nazis.

"Globally the far right is rising and it's up to us to make sure they don't gain power."

Huge numbers of police separated the anti-racists from the far right rabble.

Stand Up To Racism activist Nathan said,

"The fascist candidates—Anne Marie Waters and Jayda Fransen—hope to spread and thrive off the bitterness surrounding this by-election."

Speakers highlighted how  
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